

# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

*Issued Monthly by*

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*"The World's Record Shop"*

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THIS is the 145th issue of this little bulletin. With it we begin the thirteenth volume, and in it will be found the first of the major recordings that have been released since the Petrillo holiday. Many more are in preparation and these will be reviewed in future issues as they are made available. Several small shipments of records have been received from England recently which indicate that we may soon be able to review the important recordings that are being released abroad. It would seem therefore that the present volume of THE NEW RECORDS, which begins with this number, will contain many recordings that will be of especial interest to our readers. It should certainly contain more interesting matter than the last volume, which upon perusal will be found to contain very few major recordings of any real importance. As it looks at the moment, it will not be long before our little bulletin will contain eight and sometimes twelve pages as it did prior to the Petrillo ban.

Last month we included a renewal blank with each copy mailed, and so many renewals were received that it has been impossible for us to check our mailing list. We are, therefore, carrying over all of our subscribers, whether they renewed or not. We cannot continue this practice beyond this month, so if you have not as yet sent in your renewal, you should do so at once in order that you will not miss any issues.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

*The Unashamed Accompanist.* By Gerald Moore, 84 pp. The Macmillan Company (New York). Price \$1.50.

It is said that Gerald Moore's name appears on more records than any living artist. As most record collectors know, Mr. Moore has been under contract to HMV for a number of years and has been the accompanist on hundreds of recordings. He has appeared in concert as accompanist with a long list of the leading singers and instrumentalists of his time, among whom may be mentioned Gerhardt, Hempel, Schumann, Rethberg, Chaliapin, Kipnis, Melchior, McCormack, Elman, Feuermann, Kindler and Cassado.

We mention this at the outset in considering Mr. Moore's book, for in mentioning it, we certainly establish the fact that he is an authority in his field, and surely needs no other qualifying evidence. While Mr. Moore has appeared as a soloist in both Europe and America, and at the present time is giving concerts for men and women of the armed forces in England, he frankly admits that he is first of all an accompanist. That is his first love and he has spent his life in perfecting that very exacting profession.

His book is brief and very much to the point. Anyone interested in accompanying may gain many, many poignant pointers from this man of wide experience. He has arranged his material clearly and logically, and the fruitful information he gives may be very easily assimilated.

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## ORCHESTRA



Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74.

(Pathétique.) Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinsky. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-558. \$5.50.

Dr. Artur Rodzinsky and the New York Philharmonic celebrate their return to an active recording career, following the Petrillo ban, with this fine recording of Tschaikovsky's most popular symphony—the celebrated *Pathétique*. It is a little hard to reconcile the fact that there are at the moment five admirable and widely contrasting recordings of the *Pathétique* on hand, in current catalogues, with Dr. Rodzinsky's decision to select this symphony as his opening gun of the recording revival. There are so many fine things that cry out to be recorded, so many things that are in need of a modern version (not the case here), that it is perplexing and even irritating to have to listen to yet another recorded performance of this symphony. Certainly collectors and record fans had enough of a selection already with the very representative albums containing the *Pathétique* by the Messrs. Furtwangler, Stokowski, Ormandy, Koussevitzky and Gaubert. One is afraid that this is just another one of those deplorable and cautious manifestations of an attitude towards music in America prompted and directed by a commercial spirit.

There is nothing wrong with the new version at hand. Dr. Rodzinsky's Russian nationality apparently stands him in good stead for a penetrating understanding of this popular work. The mood is properly plangent, with a brooding hopelessness so characteristic of the Slavs in the 19th Century. Furthermore, the recording is admirable in its clarity and lifelike quality. The surfaces are about what one expects in these days of shortages and substitutes—quite acceptable but not outstanding.

Let us hope that the next release by Dr. Rodzinsky will not be the Beethoven Fifth!

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92.

Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-557. \$5.50.

The sentiments we have aired in commenting on Dr. Rodzinsky's new recording of the Tschaikovsky *Pathétique* also apply to this brand-new version of the Beethoven 7th by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. This marks Mr. Ormandy's return to an active recording career, and also his and the Philadelphia Orchestra's debut with Columbia. Such facts are of natural interest to record purchasers, but the effect is damped and somewhat nullified when one observes the fact that there are already three excellent recordings of the symphony in present catalogues—the famous and magnificent one by Toscanini and the admirable Weingartner and Stokowski versions. There is much unrecorded music which

Mr. Ormandy plays admirably, and it does seem a pity that his debut on Columbia records was not a less "safe" one.

The present album is a fine, straightforward performance of one of the most popular of all symphonies. To one who has heard the symphonies of Beethoven performed innumerable times by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra in the Academy of Music, the present recording makes a marvellously lifelike impression, but it sounds as though one heard the music from the back of the house, for the recording is often remote and "back". In climaxes the engineers have evidently turned on the juice and the results are sometimes overbright. The void that is the Academy of Music is keenly felt like a great vacuum surrounding the performers. Many of the solo groups and fine individual artists that go to make up this orchestra stand out clearly etched and detached from the rest of the orchestral body. The balance is uneven, sometimes good, at other times faint and muddled.

The performance is an excellent example of a first-class orchestra and a fine and talented conductor giving a representative performance of a Beethoven symphony during this wartime period. In years to come this particular album may derive added value from these facts.

Let us, however, fervently hope that Mr. Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra's next release will be of less hackneyed material.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Butterworth: A Shropshire Lad** — Rhapsody. The Halle Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (V-C-3287). \$1.90.

This recording was reviewed in *The Gramophone* when it was released in England in June of 1942 and several references to it have appeared since in that journal. All of which whetted our appetite, and so when a copy finally reached us a few days ago, we were all ready for it.

George Sainton Kaye Butterworth was born in London in 1885 and was killed in action in France in 1916. He was a graduate of Eton and Trinity College, Oxford. His musical development, which began at Oxford, was largely in association with H. P. Allen, Vaughan Williams and Cecil Sharp. He did considerable research in English folk-song and the influence of nationality on art generally. He composed a cycle of six songs based on Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*. The present Rhapsody is based upon a theme from one of them and was first performed at a Leeds Festival in 1913 under the direction of Nikisch. This conductor also made a recording of it about that time but it has long since disappeared from the catalogue. We don't recall ever having heard that record, but it is hard to imagine a better or more sympathetic rendition than Sir Adrian Boult gives this lovely selection upon the present disc. Perhaps now that *A Shropshire Lad* has been made available

HMV will make a recording of this composer's orchestral idyll *The Banks of Green Willows*. We remember hearing this latter piece several years ago and while it would not likely appeal to as many persons as the former selection, we thought it mighty interesting and feel that it is well worth recording.

*A Shropshire Lad* is a gentle piece for a quiet hour of meditation and is reminiscent of Debussy and Delius. It is not a work that strikes one at once, but rather a selection to live with and with which to become intimately acquainted. We found the effort fruitful and we are sure that many of our readers will thank us for calling it to their attention. The English recorders have handled it with loving care. R.

**Boccherini-Francaix: Scuola di Ballo.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-157. \$2.50.

Columbia has selected this item as a "record classic" re-issue this month. The following annotation appeared in THE NEW RECORDS upon its initial release in March, 1940.

Many composers have been relegated to comparative obscurity because of a mere popular contemporary. Such was the case of Boccherini, who lived at the time of Haydn. Many scholars agree that a great deal of his music achieves the charm and elegance of Papa Franz and, in some quartets, surpasses him. Outside of the famous minuet, played in a variety of transcriptions, his violoncello concerto and some isolated quartet movements, little of his effort has been recorded. Jean Francaix, a prize student of Mme. Boulanger, and a composer in his own right, has gathered these delightful melodies and orchestrated them so well that they do not lose their charming character. This ballet has been in the repertoire of the Monte Carlo Ballet Russe for several seasons and their recent tour in this country may have given many the opportunity to hear this work. The London Philharmonic plays in a delightful manner and the recording is above par.

**Tchaikovsky: Waltz Serenade** (No. 2 from Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 48). One side, and **Grieg: The Last Spring** (No. 2 of Two Elegiac Melodies, Op. 34). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (V-11-8727). \$1.

These two very pleasing and beautifully played selections make an ideal disc for those who like tuneful and worthwhile music. It is recorded by one of the world's greatest symphony orchestras under the direction of its permanent conductor. Both of these recordings have been available before as fillers of odd sides of masterwork sets. The Waltz Serenade was included in album M-327 containing Tchaikovsky's *Fourth Symphony* and *The Last Spring* with album M-886 containing Vivaldi's *Concerto Grosso in D minor*. We think that Victor did a very wise thing in making these lovely pieces available to those

music lovers who may not care for the major works contained in these albums. This disc should reach the best sellers' list in a hurry.

**Strange Music** (based on Grieg's "Wedding Day in Troldhaugen"). One side, and **Chopin: Waltz in C sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2**. Fred Waring and His Concert Orchestra. 1-10" disc (D-23377). 75c.

Fred Waring, he who does many things well, directs sparkling performances of these two numbers. *Strange Music* is from the big Broadway success "Song of Norway" and Mr. Waring adds his Glee Club and the vocalists Gordon Goodman and Jane Wilson to his orchestra to produce this one. In the Chopin number, Harry Simeone is at the piano, and as one listens to this side, he has the impression of a piano concerto played in fast dance time.

## CONCERTO



**Brahms: Concerto No. 2 in B flat major, Op. 83.**

Vladimir Horowitz (piano) with the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 6-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-740. \$6.50.

Victor has selected this item as a "record classic" re-issue this month. The following annotation appeared in THE NEW RECORDS upon its initial release in March, 1941.

Here is a performance which we are glad to say definitely supersedes all previous recordings of this work, from every standpoint. We can find nothing but superlatives for this remarkable album. Horowitz plays like a magician, clean and clear and sparkling, with a formidable technique. He plays brilliantly but without distortion; he plays the Andante beautifully but without any saccharine. His performance is truly a model of good taste with an abundance of inspiration. And father-in-law Toscanini provides an accompaniment the superior of which is inconceivable. And all of this goes on in the wonderful acoustics of Carnegie Hall and not the barren hard acoustics of Studio 8H. We heartily thank Victor for taking Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra out of the Studio and into the Hall. Everyone will recognize instantly the difference in timbre between this recording and the one Toscanini made of the Beethoven Fifth Symphony, or any of the others made in Studio 8H. The quality of the reproduction in this set hits an all-time high.

Thus far we have not mentioned the Second Piano Concerto as music. As is frequently the case with Brahms, there is not always the feeling of a large composition, but rather of a smaller thought inflated to something larger. But there are many magnificent sections in this work, and throughout we again give credit to the performers for minimizing any defects of the composition by their insight and their intelligent rendition. A worthy addition to any library. S.

**VOCAL**

**Song of Norway.** Kitty Carlisle and Members of the Original New York Cast with the Song of Norway Orchestra and Singing Ensemble. 6-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-382. \$6.50.

Decca has unquestionably done an outstanding job in bringing this season's leading success in the field of the operetta, from Broadway into the homes of persons all over America via the little black discs. Meticulous care and great skill have been used in preparing the *Song of Norway* for this splendid recording. All of the important musical numbers have been included and they are nicely fitted together with appropriate bits of dialogue. With the booklet that accompanies this album, in which will be found the complete text of the material recorded and a running story of the action of the play, one may sit back in his easy chair and enjoy a grand performance of the *Song of Norway* at any time.

The *Song of Norway*, as most everyone must know by this time, for the show has had wide publicity throughout the press, is an operetta based on the life and music of the universally beloved Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg. The musical adaptation and lyrics are by Robert Wright and George Forrest. The book by Milton Lazarus is from a play by Homer Curran. The original New York cast is used for this recording with the exception of Irra Petina. Kitty Carlisle, who will be remembered for her very artistic performance in Decca's recording of *The Merry Widow*, takes Miss Petina's place because the latter is under exclusive contract with Columbia.

The present set is not a collection of recordings of songs from the show which may be taken from the album and played at random, but rather a recorded performance which should be played in proper sequence. We mention this because, if in investigating this album, one takes a record or two from different parts of the operetta and plays them, he is very likely to miss the charm of the recorded performance in its entirety. The cast is excellent throughout, both musically and histrionically, and the reproduction leaves nothing to be desired on that score. R.

**Strange Music** (based on Grieg's "Wedding Day in Troldhaugen"). One side, and **There's Beauty Everywhere.** James Melton (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Al Goodman. 1-12" disc (V-11-8746). \$1.

Two popular numbers nicely sung by James Melton. *Strange Music* is from the current Broadway success "Song of Norway" and *There's Beauty Everywhere* from the MGM picture "Ziegfeld Follies." This seems to be the month for recordings of popular hits by outstanding artists. In addition to Mr. Melton, both Miss Kirsten and Thomas L. Thomas devote their talents this month to tunes from either light musical stage productions or pictures.

**Duke: April in Paris.** One side, and **Duke: The Love I Long For.** Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1137). 75c.

Miss Kirsten decided to record a couple of song hits from two musical shows. *The Love I Long For* is from "Sadie Thompson" and *April in Paris* is from "Walk a Little Faster." Both are pleasing little trifles and Miss Kirsten sings them very nicely.

**Kern: Any Moment Now.** One side, and **Kern: More and More.** Thomas L. Thomas (baritone) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1136). 75c.

Thomas L. Thomas, whose album of "Welsh Traditional Songs" enjoyed wide popularity for item of such limited appeal, has turned his attention to two song hits from the Universal Picture "Can't Help Singing." Mr. Thomas presents both of these pleasing melodies in a most attractive manner and the reproduction is splendid.

**PIANO**

**Bach: Two Part Inventions.** Erno Balogh (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Asch Set DM-102. \$4.50.

It is said that Bach wrote these fifteen short pieces as piano studies for one of his sons. They are practically never played in public and are generally unknown except to students of the piano, therefore, these recordings are of unusual value. Certainly there is no better way to comprehend the more intricate polyphonic forms than by starting with these comparatively simple little pieces in which each hand is playing an entirely independent voice. The counterpoint of these "Inventions" is fascinating to listen to and the pleasing little melodies make the lesson a charming experience. We rather feel that many music lovers are going to play these records for the musical enjoyment they give without a thought of their technical value. We played them through several times and enjoyed them thoroughly.

The distinguished European pianist, Erno Balogh, plays them magnificently and demonstrates skill of the first order. R.

**ORGAN**

**Bach: Toccata and Fugue in D minor.** G. Thalben Ball (organ). 1-12" disc (V-C-2610). \$1.90.

This recording of Bach's most popular organ work, made by the distinguished English organist, G. Thalben Ball, on the B.B.C. Organ, gained much favor in this country. Since the war it has not been available until now. A small shipment from England, which arrived recently, contained a few copies, and so we are listing it again for the benefit of those persons who might be interested.

## CHAMBER MUSIC



**Beethoven:** Quartet No. 4 in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4. Budapest String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-556. \$3.50.

Since the Victor set of this work by the Coolidge Quartet has been discontinued there has been a crying need of a modern recording. Columbia supplies it this month with this outstanding performance by the Budapest String Quartet. There is little that needs to be said about the present album. The work is well-known to all lovers of chamber music and the present recording is just about perfect, both musically and technically.

## DICTION



**The Song of Songs.** Orson Welles (reader). 1-12" disc (D-29157). \$1.

Orson Wells has selected portions of *The Song of Songs*, that beautiful lyric love poem which is to be found in the Old Testament, and gives a splendid reading on this unusual disc. It will be of especial interest to students of the Bible and also to all those who appreciate fine diction and poetry of great lyric beauty.

*The Song of Songs* was originally ascribed to King Solomon and for that reason was included in the Jewish Canon and thus found its way into the Bible, although its contents are purely secular. Later Christian writers thought that it was an allegory depicting the love of Christ for His Church. Ernest Sutherland Bates in his modern version of the Bible says in his notes: "Though the work, dating from the fourth century, was certainly not by Solomon and is certainly not an allegory, its actual author is unknown and its interpretation remains somewhat baffling . . . The best explanation seems to be suggested by the discovery of an oriental wedding custom according to which during the ceremony the bride and the groom were supposed to play the parts of a king and queen surrounded by their attendants. With his sure instinct for literary form, Richard Moulton has pointed out resemblances between *The Song of Songs* and the pastoral idylls of Theocritus and other Sicilian poets. Putting these suggestions together, one reaches the conclusion that the poem is a semidramatic idyll written originally for some notable wedding, to be presented with music, choruses, and dance, but now in too fragmentary a state to allow more than the most hypothetical reconstruction. Fortunately, the difficulties of the problem need not inhibit in the least the reader's enjoyment of the lyric beauty of the poem."

## OPERA



**Wagner:** *Die Meistersinger*—Quintet. Act III. Schumann (soprano), Melchior (tenor), Schorr (baritone), Parr (contralto) and Williams (tenor) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli. One side, and **Wagner:** *Die Meistersinger*—Aha! Da streicht die Lena schon um's Haus. Act III. Friedrich Schorr (baritone) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. 1-12" disc (V-D-2002). \$2.50.

Many persons were sorely disappointed when they noticed that Victor did not include this fine record from *Die Meistersinger* in its latest catalogue. As it was still listed in the HMV catalogue, those dealers who specialize in importing records lost no time in ordering from England. As limited shipments are now being received from abroad, it is very possible that those persons who are interested may secure a copy at this time. It is a grand record and well worth owning. However, it is highly probable that Victor will list it again after the war, and so if you care to wait you may get a domestic copy at the domestic price.

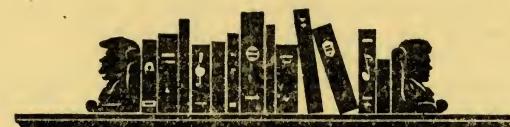
## MISCELLANEOUS



**Segovia Album.** Selections played by Andrés Segovia (guitar). 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set A-384. \$3.50.

Andrés Segovia has certainly done more than any artist of his time to bring the guitar into its own in the field of serious music, and he is thought by many critics to be the greatest living player of that instrument. He started to teach himself when he was but a very young boy and appeared in public at the age of fourteen in his native Spain. Since that time he has appeared in concerts in practically every important country in the world. His first New York performance occurred in 1928. He made a few recordings some years ago but for some reason they have not been recently available. It is therefore particularly good news that he has signed a contract with Decca and that that company has promised to release a generous number of his recordings. The first batch is contained in the present album. All of the selections are by either of the two Spanish composers Albéniz or Granados, and most of them have been adapted for the guitar by the soloist. They should be warmly welcomed by Mr. Segovia's many admirers because they are selections that are often found on his concert programs. Decca has done a grand job of recording, and the perusal of the little booklet that accompanies the album will doubtless add greatly to the enjoyment of these unusual and highly artistic records.

R.



## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

*Evenings With Music.* By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

*Adventures in Symphonic Music.* By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

*The Conductor Raises His Baton.* By William J. Finn, with a foreword by Leopold Stokowski. x + 302 pp. Harper and Brothers (New York). Price \$3.75.

*This Modern Music.* By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

*Tchaikovsky.* By Herbert Weinstock. xii + 386 + xxx pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

*Music for the Man Who Enjoys "Hamlet."* By B. H. Haggin. 129 pp. +ii. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$2.75.

*The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.* George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

*The History of Music in Performance.* Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Coneertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargall, MU—Muslraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

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VOL. 13. NO. 2

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RECORD collectors are pretty generally disappointed with the recordings that have been released since the Petrillo ban has been lifted. Except for Berlioz's *Harold in Italy*, recorded by the Boston Symphony under Koussevitsky, which is reviewed in the present issue, not one new work of major importance has been made available. By new work, we mean one that is new to the repertory of recorded music. Columbia led off last month with a recording of Tchaikovsky's Sixth by the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York, and for the Philadelphia Orchestra's debut under its label it chose Beethoven's Seventh. As several excellent recordings of both of these symphonies were already available, record collectors voiced a feeling of deep disappointment. It was felt that with a couple of years during which no recordings were made, ample time had been given to the companies to plan a schedule of recordings that would contain new items or at least re-recordings of works which were not represented in the catalogs with adequate modern renditions. During the period the recording studios were closed, word came from the companies that they were carefully checking their own catalogs as well as the catalogs of their competitors and were making up lists of appropriate items that would be given attention as soon as the ban was removed. Record collectors are wondering what became of those lists. Perhaps some interesting works have been recorded but as yet no word of them has leaked out. Of course each company keeps its future releases as deep dark secrets. Let us hope that they have some fine surprises for us.

Victor seems to have gone over to the policy of having its Red Seal artists devote their talents

to inconsequential trifles. Gladys Swarthout offers *Right as the Rain* and *Beat Out Dat Rhythm on a Drum*; Dorothy Kirsten renders *The Love I Long For* and *April in Paris*; and to top off with, the truly great Wagnerian tenor, Lauritz Melchior, presents his version of the two real musical gems *I Want What I Want When I Want It* and *Please Don't Say No*. The Melchior recordings will be found in his album of selections from "Thrill of a Romance," which is released by Victor this month and is noticed in this issue under VOCAL.

The only music that seems to be receiving serious consideration by the major companies is that which comes from the musical shows that are now reigning on Broadway. We have no quarrel with the companies for the excellent recordings that they have offered in such great abundance from *Oklahoma*, *Song of Norway* and *Up in Central Park*. They are all grand shows and contain much light music of the highest calibre. We have enjoyed the records from all of them and we are sure that most of our readers have liked them to, but we do feel that music of a much more worthwhile nature has been neglected.

The real backbone of the record industry is that large group of collectors who are building libraries of fine music. This group has had little to nourish its enthusiasm for several years. During the ban the companies could do nothing about it but now that the ban is lifted, this group should have at least a fifty-fifty break on the recordings that are being released. So far it would seem that they have been pretty well forgotten. Let us hope that this is merely a temporary condition and that the future lists will include some really desirable items that serious

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music lovers will be delighted to add to their collections.

**Editor's Note:** This editorial was written and sent to the printer on Saturday, April 7th. On the following day in his Sunday article in THE NEW YORK TIMES with the heading *Records: Slim Pickings* Mark A. Schubart makes substantially the same points. We add this note because we do not want Mr. Schubart or our readers to think that we paraphrased his article for our editorial.

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## ORCHESTRA



**Berlioz: Harold in Italy, Op. 16.** Boston Symphony Orchestra with William Primrose (viola) conducted by Serge Koussevitsky. 5-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-989. \$5.50.

Our hats are off to Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. They have saluted the lifting of the record ban with no Beethoven *Seventh* or Tchaikovsky *Sixth*, but instead have proved themselves once more the leaders of their particular field by presenting for their initial offering the first complete and only American recording of Hector Berlioz' *Harold in Italy*, Opus 16.

It is obvious that Dr. Koussevitzky has done the record world a great service, and one cannot refrain from admiring his enterprise and courage.

The present composition might almost be said to be a concerto for viola. William Primrose, an outstanding master of that instrument, has been procured to perform the solo part in the present set. The piece is divided into several movements which bear the following illuminating titles: I. *Harold in the Mountains, Scenes of Melancholy, Happiness and Joy*; II. *March of Pilgrims singing their Evening Hymn*; III. *Serenade of a Mountaineer of the Abruzzito to his Mistress, a sweetly sentimental passage*; and, IV. *The Orgy of Brigands*.

Obviously this tone poem was suggested by Lord Byron's romantic and itinerant hero, but it would be a mistake to think that the music follows the poem too closely, and the best key to the musical content is to be found in the subtitles of the four movements.

*Harold in Italy* was commissioned by Paganini, the great virtuoso of the violin and viola. Berlioz, in his memoirs, describes this vividly as follows: "Some weeks after, Paganini came to see me.

"I have a wonderful viola," said he, "an admirable Stradivari, and should greatly like to play it in public. But I have no music for it. Would you write me a solo? I have no confidence in anyone but you for such a work."

"In order to please the illustrious virtuoso, then, I endeavored to write a solo for the viola, but so combined with the orchestra as not to diminish the importance of the latter, feeling sure that Paganini's incomparable execution would enable him to give the solo instrument all its due prominence.

"No sooner was the first movement written than Paganini wished to see it. At sight of the rests, however, in the viola part in the allegro, 'That is not at all what I want,' cried he, 'I am silent a great deal too long, I must be playing the whole time.'"

Curiously enough, Paganini never played the piece, being in ill health when the composition was finally completed.

It goes without saying that Dr. Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony perform this interesting and unusual work magnificently. The beauty of William Primrose's tone and the security of his amazing technique are also evident throughout the recording. Technically, the set is excellent, as recordings of the Boston Symphony are apt to be. And so we say, *Bravo Koussevitzky!*

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

**After Dark.** Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set C-107. \$3.50.

In introducing this album Columbia remarks: "... when the soft shadows of evening obscure the bustle and sharp angles of the day, when flickering of fire-light takes you into a romantic dreamland, the soothing harmonies of Morton Gould lend melodious background to your world of make believe."

This may be spreading it on a bit thick but that is the general idea. Mr. Gould certainly gives these familiar tunes an ethereal quality. His arrangements are entirely his own and they are certainly unique. As we feel sure that most persons will find them pleasing, we do not hesitate to recommend this album.

The following selections will be found in this collection: *Temptation; Speak Low; Dancing in the Dark; Besame Mucho; That Old Black Magic; I Get a Kick Out of You; I've Got You Under My Skin; and The Very Thought of You.*

**Rose: Holiday for Strings.** One side, and **Rose: Our Waltz.** The Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-10" disc (D-23355). 75c.

Mr. Wallenstein continues with his recordings of popular selections played by a full symphony orchestra. This time he has chosen two numbers by Dave Rose, who is, of course, best known for his *Holiday for Strings* which has held its popularity now for well over a year. That's a long time for a popular selection. We can't get particularly excited about Decca's idea of having great orchestras play such stuff when they might be doing something from their regular repertory, but this is the music that the majority of the people enjoy according to Decca, and that com-

pany is going to record such music by the best artists available. However, just between ourselves, we believe that Paul Whiteman, Kostelanetz, or Fred Waring could have done as good a job or perhaps a better one with their orchestras.

R.

**Irish Melodies.** Continental's Symphonette conducted by Sula. 3-10" discs in album. Continental Set CON-24. \$2.75.

Here's an album to warm the heart of any Irishman. Each side of each record contains two selections, the first a sentimental ballad and then a spirited jig or reel. There have been many calls for instrumental recordings of Irish melodies without vocals, and this album should meet those requirements nicely. The ballads contained in this set are: *My Wild Irish Rose; Come Back to Erin; Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms; I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen; Killarney; and The Last Rose of Summer*. Each ballad is followed by one of the following dance tunes: *An Irishman's Heart to the Ladies; Fisher's Hornpipe; Wearing of the Green; Irish Washer Women; The Teetotaler's Reel; and Saint Patrick's Day in the Morning*.

The small orchestra employed is well suited to the task involved and we feel sure that those persons who go in for music of this character will be highly pleased with these recordings.

**Music of George Gershwin.** Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-559. \$3.50.

This group of recordings is even more Kostelanetz than Kostelanetz recordings usually are—if you know what we mean. The maestro has taken these Gershwin tunes and wiped off all marks of Gershwin and stamped them all over with his personal trade-mark. Kostelanetz fans will probably like them — others should listen to them before buying them. The Gershwin numbers included in this group are: *Embraceable You; Fascinating' Rhythm; The Man I Love; 'S Wonderful; Maybe; Someone to Watch Over Me; Oh, Lady Be Good; and Soon*.

**Salute to our Fighting Forces.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-10" disc (V-10-1133). 75c.

Here is a patriotic medley full of pep and go. Arthur Fiedler leads the Boston "Pops" in a sparkling performance of this lively music. The reproduction is brilliant and alive.

## CHORAL



**Hymns of Easter and Christmas Gladness.** National Radio Vespers Mixed Choir with organ accompaniment. 4-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set E. \$4.50.

From the title of this album one would think that it contains Easter and Christmas hymns but this is not

the case. It contains one Easter hymn, *Christ the Lord is Risen Today* and one Christmas hymn, *Silent Night, Holy Night*. The rest are what we would call gospel hymns. They are: *Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart; More Love to Thee, O Christ; The King of Love My Shepherd Is; Sun of My Soul; God Be With You Till We Meet Again; and Saviour Like a Shepherd Lead Us*.

All these are very nicely sung by a choir made famous by its many broadcasts over a coast to coast network. A booklet giving the words and music of each hymn is included with this album. The recording and the record surfaces show a marked improvement over that to be found in some of the earlier Bibletone sets.

## OPERA



**Two Famous Coloratura Arias.** Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Pietro Cimara. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-561. \$3.50.

Delibes: *Lakme*—Bell Song.

Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor*—Mad Scene.

In years to come, if one were asked which were the two operatic arias for which Lily Pons was most celebrated, one would unhesitatingly reply, the Mad Scene from *Lucia* and the Bell Song from *Lakme*. This month, Columbia has come forward with both of these arias newly recorded by Mme. Pons to the accompaniments of an orchestra under Pietro Cimara in what is undoubtedly so far the most important vocal issue of the post-Petrillo-ban period.

Mme. Pons has recorded the entire *scena* of the Mad Scene, beginning with the opening recitative, *Il dolce suono mi colpi di sua voce*. There are no cuts and the scene is given in its entirety, with flute obbligato by Frank Versaci, occupying four record sides. We are very happy that Mme. Pons decided to be so generous with her recording of this scene, as it gains enormously in value and interest from being so presented. The usual deletions made in recordings of the *Lakme* Bell Song are also happily absent, and the soprano presents this aria complete on two record sides.

Mme. Pons was evidently in good voice during this latest recording session. There is only one regrettable lapse from pitch, which occurs on the opening side of the *Lakme* aria. It is interesting to compare these new selections with the records made of the same numbers by Mme. Pons in 1931. The roulades and ornaments of the Mad Scene were less elaborate then, but the voice did undoubtedly sound fresher and firmer fifteen years ago, which is not to be wondered at. The soprano, in the album now at hand, still sings the Mad Scene transposed a whole tone upward from the original, ending twice on an F in alt, notes which

are not as effortless as they used to be. Throughout these two arias the rapidity of the singer's staccati is notable. Indeed she takes the bell refrain of the *Lakme* aria unnecessarily fast to our way of thinking. But this particular florid effect is Mme. Pons' ace in the hole, and it is not surprising that she makes the most of it.

The recording leaves quite a bit to be desired. With the modern idea of making every voice sound like a Flagstad, a Ruffo or a Chaliapin, no matter what its legitimate volume, Mme. Pons has been subjected to quite a bit of dishonest amplification. Though her voice has lost some of its silky sheen, the present recording technique has only emphasized this fact, and the sound engineers have been regrettably preoccupied with enlarging the volume of the voice to the neglect of its natural purity and sweetness. The results are often brittle and strident.

However, we are very glad that, notwithstanding these faults and other imperfections, Columbia has come across with such an attractive and representative album of Mme. Pons' style and vocal art.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

## VOCAL



**Thrill of a Romance**—Selections. Lauritz Melchior (tenor) with chorus and orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-990. \$2.75.

V-10-1147 Grieg: *I Love You*.

Hubay: *Lonely Night*.

V-10-1148 Schubert: *Serenade*. Arr. Stoll: *Vive L'Amour*.

V-10-1149 Herbert: *I Want What I Want When I Want It*.

Fain: *Please Don't Say No*.

As nearly everyone knows, the top Wagnerian tenor of the Metropolitan has gone to Hollywood and made a picture for MGM. His musical associates in the picture, *Thrill of a Romance*, are the King Sisters and that "Sentimental Gentleman" Tommy Dorsey. Now if you have regained your equilibrium, we'll tell you something of these songs. There isn't much to say about Grieg's *I Love You*, which is sung part in Danish and part in English, or about Schubert's *Serenade*, except that Mr. Melchior sings them just as he does in the picture. However, in *Vive L'Amour*, *Please Don't Say No* and *I Want What I Want When I Want It*, in the first two of which he is aided and abetted by a full chorus, he takes down his hair and goes to town in the spirit of the Dutch comedians that were so popular some thirty or forty years ago. To hear his "Plesse don't say no, say maybee, babee" with his tenor obbligato soaring above the chorus, is

an experience to say the least. However, it's all in fun and we suppose that even a heroic Wagnerian tenor is entitled to a day off with the boys. Mr. Melchior seems to be enjoying his to the fullest. We suppose that those persons who see the picture will be crazy to have the records, and perhaps some others who do not go to the movies will be crazy enough to want them also. Who can tell?

R.

**Romberg: Up in Central Park.** Jeanette MacDonald (soprano) and Robert Merrill (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Russell Bennett. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-991. \$2.75.

V-10-1153 *Carousel In the Park*.

*It Doesn't Cost You Anything to Dream*.

V-10-1154 *Close As Pages in a Book*.  
*The Fireman's Bride*.

V-10-1155 *The Big Back Yard*.  
*When You Walk in the Room*.

Victor is to be congratulated upon its choice of the ever-popular Jeanette MacDonald, and Robert Merrill, the young American baritone, who has recently won a Metropolitan Auditions of the Air award and will sing with the Metropolitan next season, to record these selections from the big Broadway success *Up In Central Park*. Numerous calls have been received for recordings from this show and it would seem that this album should find a ready and substantial sale just as soon as it reaches the dealers' shelves. The tunes have the usual Romberg sparkle and the clever lyrics are by Dorothy Fields. Russell Bennett made the fascinating orchestrations and directs the orchestra in these recordings. All in all, we have an album of musical comedy melodies that rates with the best in its field.

**Rodgers: The Surrey With the Fringe on Top.** One side, and **Rodgers: Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'**. (Both from "Oklahoma!") Nelson Eddy (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 1-10" disc (C-4314-M). 75c.

Mr. Eddy sings these two well-known pieces from *Oklahoma* with a nice regard for their sentiment and humor. However, as usual, Robert Armbruster gives very little if any orchestral support. It may be the recording engineers' fault, we can't be sure, but we do know that the orchestral background is very weak and at times wholly indistinguishable. Mr. Rodgers has supplied very attractive orchestral accompaniments for both of these songs, and when they cannot be heard, much of the joy of these selections is lost. Compare Victor's recording of *The Surrey With the Fringe on the Top* by James Melton with Al Goodman's Orchestra and you will quickly note what we mean by attractive orchestral support.

**Song of Norway**—Selections. Irra Petina (mezzo-soprano) and Robert Weede (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Sylvan Shulman. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-562. \$3.50.

Irra Petina, who has sung dozens of rôles with the Metropolitan and is now singing the leading part in the smash hit *Song of Norway*, and Robert Weede, the brilliant young baritone, also of the Metropolitan, present a number of selections from this musical play based upon the life of the noted Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg. They are all very pleasant to listen to, although a great many things have been done to Grieg's music before it finally became engraved on these discs. It would be an avid student indeed who could trace some of these tunes back to their original source. Miss Petina and Mr. Weede sing them all in an attractive manner, and even those persons who have not heard the operetta will doubtless find them fascinating.

It may be that our phonograph motor is not running perfectly evenly, but in the first selection in this group, *Strange Music*, Miss Petina seems to wander from the key in a couple of instances. We always hesitate to blame an artist for not maintaining pitch, when an unevenly running motor or a record that is off center is the cause.

R.

**Osser: I Dream of You.** One side, and **Styne: I'll Walk Alone.** Allan Jones (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Ray Sinatra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1151). 75c.

Allan Jones, who made *The Donkey Serenade* famous on records, has selected two very popular melodies for his present disc. As we listened to these selections we could not help feeling that Mr. Jones had been eavesdropping on Frank "The Voice" Sinatra, if you know what we mean. If we could only turn back the clock, we might be able to appreciate this style of singing, but it is too late now, we are much too old.

## DICTION



**The Oldest Christmas Story** (from St. Luke's Gospel). One side, and **The Story of the Three Wise Men** (from St. Matthew's Gospel). Charles Laughton (reader) with musical background directed by Hanns Eisler. 1-10" disc (D-23365). 75c.

Charles Laughton has taken two of the most familiar stories directly from the Gospels, and with the aid of an unintrusive musical background, presents them in a reverent and thoroughly attractive manner. This little disc proves two things: first, that the text of the Gospels, as simple and as straightforward as it is, holds great charm and makes fascinating listening, and, secondly, that Mr. Laughton is a very great artist, for were he not he could not hold our attention to stories that nearly everyone knows by heart.

## PIANO



**Chopin: Music to Remember.** José Iturbi (piano). 2-10" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-4. \$1.75.

*Mazurka in B flat, Op. 7, No. 1.*

*Waltz in D flat, Op. 64, No. 1.*

*Waltz in C sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2.*

*Fantaisie-Imromptu, Op. Posth.*

This little set is probably the result of the inspiration of two current moving pictures that are smash hits—*A Song to Remember*, a film biography of Chopin, and *Music for Millions* with Iturbi as the star. In fact, in the former, Iturbi plays the Waltz in *D flat* (Minute Waltz) offstage as the character of Chopin plays it on a silent piano before the camera. The program does not mention it but Mr. Iturbi supplies all of the piano music in *A Song to Remember*.

All of the Chopin selections on this pair of discs are familiar ones, especially the *Fantaisie-Imromptu* from which the ever-popular *I'm Always Chasing Rainbows* was taken. In order to attract the general public to music of this character, Victor has placed these excellent records in a folder with a picture of Chopin at the piano in full color upon the cover. Superb piano reproduction is an added feature.

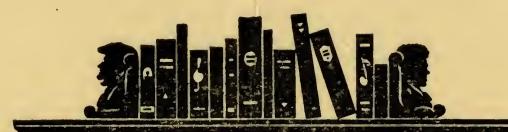
**Mozart: Sonata No. 17 in D major, K.576.** Eileen Joyce (piano). 2-12" discs (C-DX-1011 and C-DX-1012). \$4.

In the February issue of THE NEW RECORDS we listed a few recordings by Miss Joyce. American record collectors, many of whom had never heard a recording by this sincere and sensitive artist, seemed very glad of the opportunity of adding her art to their libraries. In a small batch of records from England just received we found this pair of discs containing one of Mozart's best beloved sonatas. It has been recorded a number of times. There are recordings available at present by Claudio Arrau for Victor and Robert Casadesus for Columbia. We would hardly place Miss Joyce in the class of such outstanding pianists as Messrs. Arrau and Casadesus, but we do not hesitate to state that it is entirely possible that many music lovers may prefer Miss Joyce's delicate and ethereal rendition of this lovely Mozart sonata. The piano reproduction is of the best.

R.

**Falla: El Amor Brujo**—Ritual Fire Dance. One side, and **Falla: El Amor Brujo**—Dance of Terror. José Iturbi (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1135). 75c.

About 1932 Rubinstein recorded these two selections in Europe, and Victor re-pressed the record here in America a year or two later and added it to its catalog. It has remained in the catalog ever since and has enjoyed reasonable popularity. We presume that the present modern recording will take its place. Iturbi is an ideal interpreter of music of this character and as the present reproduction rates with the best, this new release is a very welcome one.



## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

*Evenings With Music.* By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

*Adventures in Symphonic Music.* By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

*The Conductor Raises His Baton.* By William J. Finn, with a foreword by Leopold Stokowski. x + 302 pp. Harper and Brothers (New York). Price \$3.75.

*This Modern Music.* By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

*Tchaikovsky.* By Herbert Weinstock. xii + 386 + xxx pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

*Music for the Man Who Enjoys "Hamlet."* By B. H. Haggin. 129 pp. +ii. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$2.75.

*The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.* George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

*The History of Music in Performance.* Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Aesch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargall, MU—Musilraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

*Issued Monthly by*

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*The Musical Scene.* By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

Since 1940, when Virgil Thomson became music critic of the *New York Herald Tribune*, a new style of music critiques appeared. They have been praised and they have been damned, but everyone has admitted that they have been lively and interesting, and it has been generally felt that Mr. Thomson has not tried to be smart for the sake of gaining reader interest. He is not conducting a "gossip column." He is much too sincerely interested in the development of music and music appreciation here in America for that. Whatever one may think of his opinions, one must admit that he is a profound musician—a recognized composer and an able pianist and organist. In addition he is a skillful, witty, and sometimes, a brilliant writer.

*The Musical Scene* is a collection of the best of his writings that have appeared in the *Herald Tribune* during the last five years. They are grouped under the following headings: Covering the Orchestras; Chiefly Conductors; Compositions and Composers; Opera; Recitalists; Sacred and Choral; Processed Music; and General Ideas. Our readers will be particularly interested in what Mr. Thomson has to say about music on records, over the radio, and in the films, in the group under the heading Processed Music. We also feel that they will be pretty generally interested in this book as a whole, because practically all of the artists that Mr. Thomson mentions are represented by recordings in the various catalogues. We might mention a number of his critiques that are of especial interest but we will only mention two,

Three Orchestras which appeared on October 20, 1940, and The Personality of Three Orchestras which appeared on October 17, 1943, in which Mr. Thomson compares the Boston Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. We don't ask you to agree with Mr. Thomson's findings but we insist that he gives us all much to think about and that he presents his views in a lively and interesting manner.

We received a copy of *The Musical Scene* several weeks ago and ran through it hurriedly. Since that time we have picked it up again and again and read and re-read many of the critiques and always with keen interest and enjoyment. It is just that sort of a book. Leave it on your library table and you will find yourself turning to it when you have a few minutes to spare. Mr. Thomson's thoughts on music and musicians are refreshing to say the least. As his book has been carefully indexed it is very easy to find the passage that you may wish to call to the attention of your friends who are also interested in music.

\* \* \*

*The Appreciation of Music.* By Roy Dickinson Welch. xviii + 216 pp. Harper & Brothers (New York). Price \$3.

Roy Dickinson Welch is Professor of Music at Princeton University and the earlier edition of this work has been used as a textbook in numerous colleges for many years. Professor Welch has recently revised his book for use of the general public. However, we rather doubt that the general public will be very much interested. It is definitely a work for those persons who are deeply and seriously interested in musical form, rather than a general

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appreciation of music. Practically the whole text is devoted to listing and describing, with examples, the various musical forms.

As we read this book we could not help feeling that Professor Welch was sitting in a high chair with pages of notes in his hand lecturing to a class in music. The serious music student will enjoy and gain much valuable knowledge from Professor Welch's carefully prepared text, but we rather believe that it is entirely too pedantic for the average music lover who goes to make up the large majority of our readers.

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in **THE NEW RECORDS** are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

## ORCHESTRA



**Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98.**  
Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5—12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-567. \$5.50.

There is little new that can be said about the Brahms Fourth Symphony at this late date. Volumes of erudite comment have been written about it and Brahms' music in general.

After recently delivering themselves of the Beethoven Seventh for Columbia, Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra now further celebrate the lifting of the Petrillo ban with a forthright and sonorous performance of Brahms' last symphony.

As we listened to it, we took our *Gramaphone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music* from the shelf and noted that there are no less than ten versions of the E Minor Symphony already listed and available on records. This discovery somewhat discolored our enjoyment in the presence of what we must confess is really a very fine piece of playing and recording.

The Philadelphia Orchestra and Mr. Ormandy are peculiarly well equipped for the satisfactory playing of Brahms' music. It is among the best elements in their repertoire. Here we come across these artists in fine and evocative mood. All the sweeping power and breadth of Brahms' music is impressively realized, and the tone of the orchestra sounds unusually supple and alive in a performance which is solid, vigorous and convincing. The recording engineers have done an unusually good job.

The results are consistently lustrous, and a certain brash and brittle quality we have deplored in many recent releases is happily absent.

This of course stands as the most up-to-date recording of the famous symphony and is probably the best, from a point-of-view of recording quality. May we, however, be permitted a regretful backward glance over our shoulder at that pile of many lovely and worth-while unrecorded pieces that apparently lie outside of Columbia's consciousness, and which Mr. Ormandy and his men could so easily make available for us.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

**Stravinsky: Scenes de Ballet.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 2—12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-245. \$2.50.

Igor Stravinsky's name has always been linked with the world of the ballet. When we mention his name, we think simultaneously of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, of *Petrushka*, of the *Firebird* and *Le Chant du Rossignol*, and so it is not surprising in this latest recording to find the distinguished Russian again penning music which links him with that fascinating world of fantasy and make-believe.

Stravinsky himself wrote the following lines concerning his *Scenes de Ballet*: "A classical ballet which I composed during the summer of 1944. This music is patterned after the forms of the classical dance, free of any literary or dramatic argument. The parts follow each other as in a sonata or in a symphony in contrasts or similarities."

Strangely enough, this very recent composition was written at the request of Billy Rose, and parts of the work were stream-lined and used for the ballet scene which Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin danced with such spectacular success in *The Seven Lively Arts*. It was only as recently as February 3, 1945, that a complete performance in concert-form was given at a concert of the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York, with Stravinsky himself wielding the baton. Two days after this *premiere*, Stravinsky and the same orchestra repaired to the Columbia studios and made the present set of records.

The music of this composition will probably not go down to posterity as one of Stravinsky's finest accomplishments. It seemed to us rather a compromise which alternates between that rather astrigent and economical form of writing popular today, and pages of melodious and easy music scored with a lavish and expending hand. There is the finish and facility to be expected from such a sophisticated musician, but the inspiration and spontaneity of an earlier day are indeed missing.

It is naturally interesting and of value to have another volume of Stravinsky music conducted by the composer himself—all the more, as Stravinsky ranks high as a conductor of his own music. The recording is excellent.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

**Mozart: Symphony No. 41 in C major, K. 551.** ("Jupiter"). Seven sides, and **Mozart: Cosi Fan Tutte**—Overture. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 4—12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-565. \$4.50.

We suppose that the present release of the *Jupiter* Symphony by Bruno Walter and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York, will stand as the definitive performance of this work on records for years to come. Columbia has done a grand job in every way, for the records sound unusually full and glowing, and furthermore, Mr. Walter has been caught at his very best, which is very, very good.

The distinguished Viennese conductor, who needs no introduction here as a Mozart specialist, has recorded this work before. There is a good version of this symphony by him on Victor set M-584 with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, but neither the tone of the orchestra, nor the recording itself is as good or lifelike as that to be found on this new release. The only other version in the catalogues, is an ancient and not too satisfactory recording by Sir Thomas Beecham, which despite that worthy's signal qualities as a conductor of Mozart, suffers from thin and inadequate reproduction.

Bruno Walter occupies such a unique position in the hearts of American music lovers, that it was a splendid *coup* on Columbia's part, to secure him for the *Jupiter*. It is more than mere pleasure to be able to endorse this album without reservations.

We would note that after two to three playings of these records the tone-quality is much improved over their initial playing. D.

**Offenbach: Orpheus in Hades**—Overture. Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Karl Krueger. 1—12" disc (V-11-8761). \$1.

Victor releases this month its first recording of the newly re-organized Detroit Symphony Orchestra under the direction of the very talented American conductor, Karl Krueger. Mr. Krueger was born in New York, but spent his boyhood in Kansas. He studied abroad with the great Arthur Nikisch, and was for some time assistant conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna Opera. In 1925 he became conductor of the Seattle Symphony and in 1932 he took over the same post with the Kansas City Philharmonic. He remained there until he became musical director of the new Detroit Symphony in 1943. He is one of the first Americans to hold such a position with a major symphony orchestra in this country.

Mr. Krueger gives this lively overture a spirited reading and the big Detroit Symphony (116 pieces) shows to excellent advantage. Nearly everyone likes Offenbach's tuneful melodies and so this disc should have a ready welcome everywhere. Many

persons throughout the country will learn of the new Detroit Symphony through this initial recording. R.

**Dinner Music.** Kel Murray and his Orchestra. 4—10" discs in album. Sonora Set MS-467. \$2.50.

Here is some suitable music for the next time you invite grandma for dinner. She will know and love all of these pieces we are sure. The selections are: *Andante Cantabile*; *To a Wild Rose*; *Serenade* (Toselli); *Traumerei*; *Minuet in G* (Paderewski); *Intermezzo* from "Cavalleria Rusticana"; *None but the Lonely Heart*; and *Souvenir*.

The blurb on the inside cover of this album says: "These soothing melodic selections will help you to leave the cares and worries of the world . . . will help you relax, will lift your spirits." We suggest trying to give yourself a lift with *None but the Lonely Heart* or *Traumerei*—it's a good trick is you can do it.

Funeral directors are always looking for new records to play on their sound systems, and with the possible exception of Paderewski's *Minuet*, these recordings should prove highly satisfactory.

**Lullabies.** Eddy Brown and his String Ensemble with vocals by Crys Holland (mezzo-soprano) and Jean Merrill (soprano). 4—10" discs in album. Sonora Set MS-462. \$2.50.

This album contains pleasing little melodies played by a string ensemble headed by the noted violinist Eddy Brown—some with vocals and some without. The *Berceuse* from "Jocelyn" and *Sleep, Baby, Sleep* are instrumental only. *Ma Curly Headed Baby* and *Love's Old Sweet Song* have vocals by Crys Holland, and *Sweet and Low*; *Lullaby* (Brahms); *Lullaby* from "Erminie"; and *That's An Irish Lullaby* have vocals by Jean Merrill. Both of these young women have excellent voices, as those who listen to the radio well know, and present the songs that they sing on these discs in a most acceptable manner. If you would like some recordings of Lullabies, this album should be very acceptable.

**Hit Parade.** Mark Warnow and his Orchestra featuring vocals by Jerry Wayne and Vera Barton. 4—10" discs in album. Sonora Set MS-470. \$2.50.

The "top tunes" that may be heard on the radio day after day and sung in the best radio manner are contained in this album. The titles are: *Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive*; *Every Time We Say Goodbye*; *I Didn't Know About You*; *The Very Thought of You*; *I'll Walk Alone*; *Time Waits for No One*; *I'm Making Believe*; and *Let's Take the Long Way Home*. The only advantage these records have over the radio is that there is no commercials on the records.

**VOCAL**

**Songs of Jerome Kern.** Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Sylvan Shulman. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-568. \$4.50.

C-7421-M *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man.  
They Didn't Believe Me.*

C-7422-M *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes.  
Look for the Silver Lining.*

C-7423-M *All the Things You Are.  
The Touch of Your Hand.*

C-7424-M *The Song Is You.  
Don't Ever Leave Me.*

With this album of four 12-inch records of the songs of Jerome Kern, Risë Stevens, personable mezzo of the Metropolitan Opera Association, follows in the recent footsteps of other important singers, by devoting her talents to a night-club type of singing as a celebration of the lifting of Petrillo's ban.

Miss Stevens, every bit as much in the fashion as Gladys Swarthout, Lauritz Melchoir, Dorothy Kirsten, Eleanor Steber, and James Melton, will probably profit handsomely through the release of the present volume.

Jerome Kern has a charming and facile gift for melody, but his songs are heard to best advantage through a straightforward, simple treatment. Nothing could be more opposite than the results we listened to here. Miss Stevens languishes through these numbers to the most elaborately saccharine orchestrations we have ever heard. Andre Kostelanetz appears as ascetic as Bach, if compared to this orchestra conducted by Sylvan Shulman. By the time we had played the eighth song in the set, there was a feeling of so much accumulated sweetness that we had the sensation of having been dipped deep in a bowl of honey.

To be sure, Miss Stevens' voice sounds fresh and attractive, and the songs selected are among Kern's more popular. Why these were not made on 10-inch surfaces is hard to guess, for they seem long drawn-out on the 12-inch records. But more deplorable yet, is a misrepresentation of some charmingly simple and melodious songs through a style whose over-elaboration is certainly a triumph of bad taste.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

**Kern: Can't Help Singing—Selections.** Deanna Durbin (soprano) and Robert Paige (tenor) with mixed chorus and orchestra conducted by Edgar Fairchild. 2-10" discs and 1-12" disc in album. Decca Set 387. \$3.

Decca offers the song hits from Universal's very successful picture *Can't Help Singing*. The music

is by that master of tuneful melodies, Jerome Kern. Deanna Durbin and Robert Paige, the very talented artists who make these records are featured in the picture. They are assisted on these records by the Can't Help Singing Mixed Chorus which was also a prominent feature of the film.

These songs may not rate with the best from Mr. Kern's pen but they are mighty pleasing, and as always, they are in the best of taste. We found *California-I-Ay* and *More and More* very attractive. The other selections in this album are: *Can't Help Singing*; *Any Moment Now*; *Elbow Room*; and *Swing Your Sweetheart*. A leaflet giving the story of the picture and a short biographical sketch of Miss Durbin is included with this set of records.

For a half-hour of delightful popular music this album is heartily recommended.

**Loesser: Rodger Young. One side, and Crawford: The Army Air Corps.** John Charles Thomas (baritone) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Victor Young. 1-10" disc (V-10-1167). 75c.

Throughout the whole country there is a great demand for Frank Loesser's ballad in hill-billy style telling the story of Rodger Young. Mr. Thomas sings it with proper spirit and is assisted by an able chorus. It would seem to us that it might have been more effective without the chorus but that is only a personal preference. On the reverse side of this disc, Mr. Thomas gives us his version of the famous song of the Army Air Corps. Here is a record that is surely in the spirit of the times.

**Rodgers: Oklahoma! — Selections.** James Melton (tenor), Eleanor Steber (soprano) and John Charles Thomas (baritone) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Al Goodman and Victor Young. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-988. \$2.75.

V-10-1142 *Oklahoma.*

*The Surrey With the Fringe on Top.*

V-10-1143 *People Will Say We're in Love.  
Out of My Dreams.*

V-10-1144 *Kansas City.*

*Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'.*

Victor has chosen James Melton, Eleanor Steber and John Charles Thomas for its album of selections from *Oklahoma*. And it's a mighty happy choice. These sparkling songs certainly are beautifully sung by these excellent artists and a fine chorus and splendid orchestral support make these recordings most attractive. If one doesn't care for the more nearly complete Decca recording by the original New York company, which by the way is about tops in recordings of musical comedies, or does not feel that he wishes to spend five dollars for recordings from *Oklahoma*, he can do no better than to select the present Victor set. All of the really outstanding numbers are included in it and the rendition of all of them is highly satisfactory.

**Kilpinen Society**—Nineteen Songs. Gerhard Hüsch (baritone) with piano accompaniments by Margaret Kilpinen. 5-12" discs in album. \$12.50.

The Kilpinen Society was sponsored by HMV in England in 1936 and the issuance of this album in May of that year was the result. A few copies reached America and were quickly disposed of to discerning collectors. Since that time many efforts have been made to secure additional albums but without success. Very much to our surprise a few of them were received in a recent shipment of records from England. This is not an item that will appeal to the average music lover, but we are sure that enough of our readers will be interested to warrant our devoting some space to it in this issue.

At the time that these recordings were released the eminent English musicologist, Walter Legge, supplied these pertinent notes:

"Yrjö Kilpinen was born in Helsingfors, Finland, on February 4, 1892. He studied pianoforte, harmony and counterpoint at the Conservatorium in his native city and later in Berlin and Vienna. . . . Kilpinen now lives in the country close to Helsingfors. Like Sibelius, and a few other eminent Finnish artists, he receives a small pension granted by the Finnish Government to help him to concentrate on creative work. Until 1933, Kilpinen concentrated on songs, of which he has now written over 500, about half of which have been published. In the last two years he has written some sonatas and suites for pianoforte which have not yet been printed. His merits as a song writer were quickly recognized in his own and in the Scandinavian countries. . . .

"Gerhard Hüsch, who has enjoyed the advantage of studying the songs with Kilpinen, was their pioneer in German-speaking countries. A chance meeting in Cologne some five years ago quickly ripened into close friendship, and after including some Kilpinen songs in many of his recital programmes, Hüsch gave a concert entirely devoted to them in Berlin in the spring of 1934. From the numerous and enthusiastic articles which appeared in the Press at that time it is clear in the minds of German musicians Kilpinen is in direct line of succession of the great song writers which began with Schubert. The first English performance of Kilpinen's songs was given at a private concert in November, 1933, by Astra Desmond and F. V. Schuster. . . . At forty-three, the age at which Wolf died (though his creative career had ended seven years earlier), Kilpinen is the most admired and discussed song writer of his time."

Kilpinen is hardly known in America at all and so these recordings are of especially value. There is sufficient variety in these eighteen songs for anyone to get a very good idea of the composer's place in the realm of the art song.

## CHORAL



**The Coronation of King George VI**—Choral Selections. 3-12" discs in album. \$7.50.

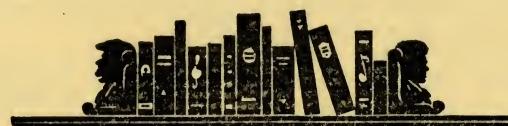
Doubtless some of our readers will recall that a set of records was issued in England shortly after the coronation of King George VI which contained the ceremony just as it was broadcast to the world by the BBC. A few of these sets, which consisted of fifteen twelve-inch records, reached America and were quickly purchased by those collectors who were interested in recordings of historic interest. The principal feature of this set of discs, from a musical point of view, was the glorious anthems sung by the immense choir.

Recently there have arrived from England a few sets of three records each, chosen from the complete set because they contain most of the anthems that were sung at the coronation. The anthems included are: Parry's *I Was Glad*; Handel's *Zadok the Priest*; Tye's *O Come, Ye Servants*; Purcell's *Hear My Prayer*; and Dyson's *O Praise God*. It is interesting to note that Handel wrote his now famous *Zadok the Priest* for the coronation of another George, George II. For those who are interested in fine choral music superbly sung, this album will have a very strong appeal. We do not hesitate to recommend it.

When this album arrived, we looked up the review we wrote of the complete recording which appeared in our September, 1937, issue. May we quote it here, just to show that things are not as black as they were when these lines were written.

"The historical significance of this recording is beyond imagination. May not our children, and our children's children, listen to this age-old ceremonial, which many persons think will never be enacted again? Long before another coronation of an English king, many intelligent students of world affairs think that the ugly heads of Fascism, Nazism or some other equally obnoxious 'ism' will have so dominated this world of ours that such glorious ceremonials will have become a thing of the romantic past. God forbid, but if such a thing should come to pass, perhaps some thoughtful persons may gain inspiration from these discs, and start the minds of the peoples of the world back towards a more peaceful and dignified course of life." R.

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## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

*Evenings With Music.* By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

*Adventures in Symphonic Music.* By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

*The Conductor Raises His Baton.* By William J. Finn, with a foreword by Leopold Stokowski. x + 302 pp. Harper and Brothers (New York). Price \$3.75.

*This Modern Music.* By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

*Tchaikovsky.* By Herbert Weinstock. xii + 386 + xxx pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

*Music for the Man Who Enjoys "Hamlet."* By B. H. Haggin. 129 pp. +ii. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$2.75.

*The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.* George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

*The History of Music in Performance.* Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibliotone, BO—Best, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Margalef, MU—Musilraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Parciale, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, S—Seneca, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timeley, and V—Victor.

# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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By mail to any address  
50c. per year

*Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death.* By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

After reading Mrs. Caruso's book, one has a very vivid picture of Enrico Caruso, the man, the artist, the husband, and the father. Dorothy Caruso knew her distinguished husband only a few months before they were married and their life together covered but a span of three years. He died in Naples on August 2, 1921. However, she seems to remember every incident of that eventful period and with the aid of his many letters to her, which she quotes verbatim, she gives us a character study which is both intensely interesting and fully illuminating. We old-timers will refresh our memories and add much lively data to our store of knowledge of the greatest personality in the history of opera in America. Youngsters may learn much of the great Caruso, of whom they have heard their elders speak in such glowing terms, by perusing this fascinating book.

The excellent reproductions of informal photographs, and the many pictures of this great actor and singer in costume are of particular interest. Throughout the book there are many of Caruso's inimitable caricatures. The final pages are devoted to a complete list of Caruso recordings with dates on which the recordings were made and the various record numbers under which they were issued. Some 234 records are thus catalogued in this discography.

There will be those who will criticise this volume, saying that Dorothy Caruso overly stresses the great love that Caruso had for her

and grossly exaggerates her importance in his life. We admit that that seems to be the primary theme of her work, but if we will be reasonably tolerant of that, we can gain an intimate picture of the final period of his life that is quite rewarding in a fuller understanding of this remarkable artist.

\* \* \*

In a recent shipment from England there were a few copies of some records made by the famous operatic soprano, Lillian Nordica. The following are available:

- 74026 *Annie Laurie*.
- 74027 *Mandoline* (Debussy).
- 74028 *Polonaise* from "Mignon."
- 74029 *Serenade* (Strauss).
- 74024 (a) *Omaha Indian Trail Song*  
(Cadman).
- (b) *Mighty Lak' a Rose* (Nevin).
- 74022 *Hunyadi Laslos* (Erkel).
- 74025 *Liebestod* from "Tristan and Isolde."

These records are collectors' items and will be of interest to those persons who are building libraries containing recordings by artists of the "Golden Age of Song." The price of these discs is \$4 each.

\* \* \*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of excise tax. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

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## ORCHESTRA



Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27.

Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-569. \$6.50.

Anything that touches Sergei Vassilievich Rachmaninoff, so recently dead, has a peculiar interest and fascination for the American music public.

Columbia, no doubt with this in mind, has here brought out the Russian composer's *Symphony No. 2 in E minor*, played with much drive and authority by Artur Rodzinsky and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York.

A fine service has been vouchsafed lovers of symphonic records, for, excepting a none too well balanced or up-to-date version by Eugene Ormandy and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, there was no other recording of this work to be had.

Rachmaninoff was 33 when he began writing his *Symphony No. 2*. He had retired to Dresden in 1906, to escape the social life, as well as his operatic duties in Moscow, and he now gave himself entirely to composition. A piano sonata, the tone poem *Isle of the Dead*, and the present symphony, were achieved during these two years of self-imposed exile. The *Symphony No. 2* was presented to the public for the first time in February 8, 1908, after the composer had returned to Russia.

Mr. Philip Hale, distinguished Boston critic, made the following penetrating appraisal of the symphony: "The reasons for the popularity of this symphony are not far to seek. The themes are eminently melodious, and some of them are of singular beauty; there is rich coloring; there are beautiful nuances in color; there is impressive sonority; there are frequent and sharp contrasts in sentiment, rhythm, expression; there is stirring vitality."

The present set is finely sonorous and Dr. Rodzinsky sees to it that all Rachmaninoff's thematic material—so typical of the composer—is brought out vividly and with stirring effect.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

Lalo: *Symphonie Espagnole*, Op. 21. Nathan Milstein (violin) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-564. \$3.50.

Columbia's recordings of the Philadelphia Orchestra, since the lifting of the Petrillo ban, are unusually sonorous and lifelike, and the present album is no exception.

Nathan Milstein, Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra are an interesting combination for the undertaking of Lalo's colorful work, and the technical brilliance of the violinist as well as the distinctive tonal features of the orchestra seem to lend themselves easily and appropriately to the fashioning of this recording.

The *Symphonie Espagnole*, as here presented, contains four movements: *Allegro non troppo*; *Scherzando*; *Andante*, and the celebrated final *Rondo*. The composition is brilliant, vivid in contrasts, and compact with a compactness which offers both the economy and the realism of the Latin races. It is decidedly pleasant and sophisticated music—the work of a virtuoso.

These artists follow a procedure which has become quite usual in the playing of Lalo's composition, which is the omission of the rarely heard third movement or *Intermezzo*. Of the other two recordings extant, Menuhin's and Huberman's, only the former offers the *Symphonie Espagnole* as originally planned by the composer.

Lalo's music has authentic Spanish feeling, not only the pretty Spanish effects which generally spell Spain for Anglo-Saxons, but also the sombre and brutally violent aspects of that country. The reason for this is that Lalo, though a native of Lille, France, was descended from an old Spanish family that had lived in France for several generations.

This is altogether an attractive set and the partnership of the artists employed, an unusually happy one.

Mr. Milstein plays gracefully and yet forcefully throughout, taking advantage of the brilliant opportunities afforded him by the final rondo—a celebrated *tour-de-force* much beloved by violinists who can encompass it successfully. Mr. Ormandy and the Orchestra are also in apparent prodigal mood and have seldom, lately, appeared to better advantage. Recording—A 1.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

Bernstein: *On the Town*—Selections. Victor Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw and *On the Town* Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 4-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-995. \$3.50.

Leonard Bernstein, the young American composer and conductor, has turned his attention to Broadway and has given New York one of this season's smash hits. *On the Town* is an unique type of musical play—a fantasy, with the ballet given much prominence throughout the action. The theme of *On the Town* is New York of today and Mr. Bernstein has written suitable music for that theme. It is jazzy, coarse, full of dissonance and well accentuated rhythm. He has not tried to make Times Square seem to be anything that it isn't. Several of the tunes are quite catchy, especially *Lucky to be Me* and *Some Other Time*. The most attractive music is that which the composer has supplied for the ballets. It has a style of its own and is fully and lustily orchestrated. Mr. Bernstein conducts the orchestra for all the ballet music in this recording and turns out mighty brilliant performances. One cannot help being moved by it. He may be moved to dislike it, or he may be truly thrilled by it, but he cannot just let it pass without any reaction. This music demands attention. It will be

compared with the orchestral music of George Gershwin.

A large portion of the score has been captured on these records and so anyone may get a very good idea of the music from *On the Town* from this set of discs. A large and thoroughly adequate orchestra has been employed for this recording and has been expertly recorded by Victor. The vocal numbers with orchestral accompaniment have been directed by the talented and very able Robert Shaw, whose several choral recordings for Victor have been well received.

R.

**Gould: American Salute.** One side, and **Gould: Yankee Doodle Went to Town.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-8762). \$1.

Here's a patriotic record with plenty of zip. Morton Gould has made a symphonic arrangement of *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* which he calls *American Salute*, and he has done a bang-up job. It is the better of the two selections, but his arrangement of *Yankee Doodle* is not far behind. These pieces are "duck soup" for the Boston "Pops" and they certainly go to town in a big way with both of them. If you can keep your feet still while listening to this disc, you are 100% in self-control. The reproduction is of the best.

## OPERA



**Moussorgsky: Boris Godounoff**—Excerpts. Alexander Kipnis (bass) with Victor Symphony Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Nicolai Berezowsky. Robert Shaw, Choral Director. 5-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1000. \$5.75.

It is with a sense of real pleasure that we heartily endorse RCA Victor's splendid release—the so-called *Recordrama* of Moussorgsky's towering masterpiece, *Boris Godunow*.

In a handsome album, containing much interesting reading material on the opera and its composer, interspersed with pictures and photographs, the following selections are to be found: *Introduction and Opening Chorus; Coronation Scene; Varlaam's Song; Monologue: I have attained the Highest Power; Dialogue between Boris and Prince Shouisky; Clock Scene; Farewell and Death of Boris*.

As we played through the album, it became apparent that no pains were spared in approaching this colossal work with all the respect and seriousness it deserves. Alexander Kipnis' superb bass, with its distinctly Russian timbre, has been enlisted to give authenticity to the title role. A full-throated chorus under the sensitive direction of Robert Shaw, and an unusually alert orchestra conducted by Nicolai Berezowsky, are also employed to signal advantage.

Even more than in stage representations the present

*Recordrama* evolves around its focal point—the character of Boris.

Alexander Kipnis was surely RCA Victor's logical choice. Today there is no finer vocal exponent of the role, and the basso is furthermore equipped by birth and background to undertake successfully his imposing task.

When Mr. Kipnis appeared in the opera at the Metropolitan during the season of 1942-43, his work drew special admiration from the purely musical angle. His was found to be an impersonation of much weight and dignity, and the music was beautifully and authentically sung. From the actor's standpoint, his composition of the role lacked the thrust, the histrionic magic others had given to it; but vocally, except for some effort in reaching the highest notes, little fault could be found.

As the vocal aspect is what we are primarily concerned with in an album such as this, we can only admire the broad, unctious legato of Mr. Kipnis' tones; his command of *mezza-voce* (perhaps now not all that it used to be), and his deep feeling for the text and the drama's meaning as a whole.

Comparison with some of Chaliapin's records of these scenes is not only interesting, but inevitable. One might say that Kipnis sings the music more conventionally, more solidly, perhaps more musically than his great predecessor. His *Clock Scene* (in which the usurper thinks he sees the spectre of the murdered Tsarevitch) does not have all the impact, tension and freedom of Chaliapin's version, nor does the *Death Scene*, impressive as it is here, become quite the tremendous and shattering event that Chaliapin created. But, right here and now, we might just as well make up our minds to the fact that there will probably not arise again—at least, not in our generation—anything like that unique and unbridled genius, that giant of the lyric stage that was Chaliapin.

Mr. Kipnis naturally enjoys a superior recording technique. In fact, these records are admirably balanced in every way. The basso's *Town of Kazan*; his brief part in the *Coronation Scene*, and the interesting, hitherto unrecorded, dialogue with Prince Shouisky, are all vividly presented and capture much of the flavor and excitement of an actual performance.

The choral portions of the *Recordrama* are unusually successful. The marvellous scene in the courtyard of the Novodevitch Monastery has been included, and very properly opens the album. The *Coronation Scene*, with its thunder of bells and acclaim of the populace, is quite the occasion it should be. The chorus also reappears impressively in the final scene, the *Death of Boris*. A word must be said for the adroit handling of Prince Shouisky's lines by a pleasant-voiced tenor, Ilya Tamarin. And a fine orchestral depth and balance gives the album our final and only too willing stamp of approval.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE

**VOCAL**

**Romberg: Up in Central Park**—Selections. Wilbur Evans, Eileen Farrell, Betty Bruce, and Celeste Holm with Up in Central Park Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Max Meth. 4—10" discs in album. Decca Set 395. \$3.50.

A month or so ago Victor released an album of selections from *Up in Central Park* sung by Jeanette MacDonald and Robert Merrill. It was very well received. Now Decca issues its album containing all of the selections in the former album and in addition two other numbers. Decca's artists are headed by the baritone of the original New York production, Wilbur Evans. The orchestra and chorus of that production under the brilliant direction of Max Meth support the Decca singers in a most pleasing manner. We rather feel that those persons who have seen the show, and perhaps the majority of others, will prefer the Decca version.

The following selections are in both sets: *Carousel in the Park*; *It Doesn't Cost You Anything to Dream*; *Close as Pages in a Book*; *The Fireman's Bride*; *The Big Back Yard*; and *When You Walk in the Room*. Decca added *April Snow* and *Currier and Ives* to its album.

Just as a footnote we would like to add that we got a big kick out of Celeste Holm's rendition of *The Fireman's Bride* in the present set. R.

**By Request.** Nelson Eddy (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 4—10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-571. \$3.50.

- C-4315-M *Great Day*  
Without a Song
- C-4316-M *Red Rosy Bush*  
*Frog Went A-Courtin'*
- C-4317-M *Because*  
My Message
- C-4318-M *Strange Music*  
*I Love You*

The eight selections in this album are ones that Mr. Eddy is continually requested to sing at his concerts and over the air. He has sung them so many times that they come easy to him and he seems to be enjoying his renditions with his listeners. We are glad to report that Mr. Armbruster has at last found his orchestra and the accompaniments to most of these songs can be heard and enjoyed as a part of the performance. In most of Mr. Eddy's previous recordings Mr. Armbruster's orchestra was indistinguishable or came through as a faint wheeze somewhere in the distance.

Mr. Eddy was in top form when he made these recordings and his voice sounds fresh and virile. His many fans will welcome this album with open arms and enjoy it thoroughly. R.

**Moods by Greta Keller.** Greta Keller (chanteuse). 3—10" discs in album. Asch Set ASP-101. \$3.50.

The blurb on the inside of the cover of this album says: "Greta Keller is the chanteuse of muted rhapsodies of love, of wine and women in three-quarter time, and of ethereal horoscopes." Your guess is as good as ours as to what this all means, but we are pretty sure that a great many of us are going to be respond to Miss Keller's intense crooning. It reeks of sensuous perfume, in the atmosphere of a heavily carpeted and dimly lighted night club just off of Park Avenue.

For the last dozen or more years Miss Keller has appeared with great success in the more exclusive night clubs of the Continent, England, South America and the United States. Her style appeals to the smaller audiences in the quieter spots and therefore is particularly effective when it is transmitted to records.

For this album, Miss Keller has chosen six songs. *Strange Music* and *Time on My Hands* she sings in English, *Tu sais* and *L'Accordeoniste* in French and *Ich war so gern einmal verliebt* and *Erst Wann's aus wird sein* in German. The Harry Lubin Orchestra gives her just the support she needs to create the proper atmosphere. R.

**Schubert: Ave Maria.** One side, and **Shannon: That's an Irish Lullaby** (from "Going My Way"). Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Sylvan Shulman. 1—12" disc (C-7425-M). \$1.

Here is a perfect example of a fine artist wasting her talents and not making a very good job of it at that. Miss Stevens singing *Too-r-a-loo-ra-loo-ral* with orchestra bells and everything, shows what happens when a Metropolitan artist invades a field in which Bing Crosby is supreme. The reverse side of the disc contains an undistinguished rendition of Schubert's *Ave Maria* with an orchestra which seems to be composed of a piano, a violin and a 'cello.

Artist's royalty checks are important but a sense of the appropriate is also of some importance too.

**Foster: The Americans Come.** One side, and **Four-drain: Chevauchée Cosaque** (Cossack's Prayer for His Horse). (Sung in French). Richard Crooks (tenor) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1—10" disc (V-10-1150). 75c.

Richard Crooks has selected two patriotic numbers that were popular during World War I and sings them in a stirring manner. His voice never sounded better and the martial character of the music is appropriate for the times through which we are passing. He is strongly supported by an fine orchestra under the direction of Maximilian Pilzer.

**Editor's Note:** Is this the Mr. Pilzer who made violin recordings for Victor some twenty-five years ago?

**Loesser: Rodger Young.** One side, and **Loesser: Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition.** Nelson Eddy (baritone) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 1—12" disc (C-7426-M). \$1.

Columbia offers its version of the popular ballad of the war, *Rodger Young*, sung by Nelson Eddy. Mr. Eddy gives a telling performance, and if we were to choose, we would very likely select his record among the several that are available. While *Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition* may be old stuff now, Nelson Eddy seems to bring it back to life with a well-arranged version and stirring performance. It is by all counts the best recording of this song, which was so popular a year or so ago.

**I Spoke to Jefferson at Guadalcanal.** One side, and **The House I Live In.** Conrad Thibault (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Harry Sosnik. 1—10" disc (D-23346). 75c.

Conrad Thibault, an excellent American baritone, sings these two topical songs with a nice air of refinement and good taste. *The House I Live In* was featured in the Universal Picture *Follow the Boys*. *I Spoke to Jefferson at Guadalcanal* is of the better grade of Hillbilly ballads. One either likes such selections or he doesn't. If these songs are not known to you, you had better hear them before you add them to your library.

## DICTION



**Gallico: The Snow Goose.** Herbert Marshall, Joan Loring and supporting cast with orchestra conducted by Victor Young. 3—12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-386. \$3.50.

It is one thing to assign to a well-established musical organization a work from its regular repertory and have it record it, or to select appropriate selections for a vocal or instrumental soloist for recording, but it is an entirely different and much more difficult thing to find a story suitable for recorded dramatization. Decca is supreme in this latter field. Among its outstanding achievements in dramatic recordings may be mentioned: *Treasure Island*; *Alice in Wonderland*; *The Count of Monte Cristo*; and *The Juggler of Our Lady*. Other companies have made recordings of dramatic productions that were currently in the theatre but Decca has sought out suitable texts, dramatized them, and in many cases has had appropriate musical backgrounds composed for them, and then presented them on records with a fine cast of able actors. We feel that this extraordinary effort on Decca's part is worthy of recognition by those who are interested in widening the scope of entertainment provided by recordings.

The present dramatization of Paul Gallico's *The Snow Goose*, which appeared first in *The Saturday*

*Evening Post*, and then in book form published by Alfred Knopf, is perhaps the finest thing that Decca has done in this field. Herbert Marshall was chosen for the lead, and Victor Young composed the musical score. The adaptation was made, and the production directed, by Nat Wolff. An able cast supports Mr. Marshall. The story is a lovely and moving fantasy with the escape of the battered British Army from Dunkerque as a dramatic background. Herbert Marshall, assisted by the very talented Joan Loring, hold the interest of the listener from the first line to the finish, without in the slightest overplaying their parts. The theme of *The Snow Goose*, while intense, is simple and unaffected, and requires a finesse which will test the ability of the most able actors. As excellent taste is evident in every phase of this recording, we do not hesitate to recommend it to even the most fastidious.

R.

## PIANO



**Falla: El Amor Brujo**—Ritual Fire Dance. One side, and **Falla: El Amor Brujo**—Dance of Terror. José Iturbi (piano). 1—10" disc (V-10-1135). 75c.

This disc was issued as a special release early in May, and from the reports that we have had, it jumped immediately to a prominent place on the best sellers lists all over the country. There is little wonder at this, for both selections are full of the fascinating fire for which Falla's Spanish music is noted. Iturbi is in fine form and he turns out two performances that are brilliant and stirring to the extreme. Splendid reproduction adds to the attractiveness of this outstanding record.

## MISCELLANEOUS



**Carlos Montoya**—Flamenco Guitar Solos. Carlos Montoya (guitar). 3—10" discs in album. Asch Set SP-100. \$3.50.

Carlos Montoya, who was born in Madrid, comes from a famous family of Spanish Gypsy musicians. When he was quite a young man he attracted the attention of the great dancer Argentina and she persuaded him to tour with her as a soloist and accompanist. Montoya has been heard throughout Europe, the United States and the Far East. He has recently given concerts over NBC, and has appeared with the Rochester Symphony Orchestra under the direction of José Iturbi.

He is primarily noted for his playing of Flamenco guitar music and the present album contains selections which he considers most representative of that idiom. They have been faithfully recorded by Asch, and this set of discs is highly recommended for those who are interested in music of this character.



## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

*Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death.* By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

*The Musical Scene.* By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

*Evenings With Music.* By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

*Adventures in Symphonic Music.* By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

*The Conductor Raises His Baton.* By William J. Finn, with a foreword by Leopold Stokowski. x + 302 pp. Harper and Brothers (New York). Price \$3.75.

*This Modern Music.* By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

*The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.* George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

*The History of Music in Performance.* Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

**NOTE:** All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Boat, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Margalef, MU—Musicalraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

*Issued Monthly by*

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

*"The World's Record Shop"*

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EVERY so often an album of more than usual interest is issued which we feel rates more than a regular review. Columbia has just released such an item. It is Norman Corwin's story of the rise and fall of Naziism as broadcast on V-E Day (May 8, 1945). Its appropriate title is *On a Note of Triumph*. It was written, produced and directed by Norman Corwin. Martin Gabel, the narrator, is ably assisted by an excellent cast. The original score is by Bernard Herrman, and the orchestra, which gives such an excellent musical background, is conducted by Lud Gluskin. This set consists of 6 12-inch discs in album. Columbia Set M-575. Price \$6.50.

This broadcast created such a stir that it was repeated at noon on the Sunday following V-E Day. It was acclaimed by the critics, many of them stating that it was the greatest broadcast of the decade, some saying that it was the outstanding broadcast of all time. One critic said that it should be played each morning for the delegates at the World Security Conference in San Francisco. Another suggested that CBS release it so that it might be played over all of the other networks. Columbia, realizing its importance and power, recorded it in its entirety and so it is available, not only for us to whom the horrors of the Nazi regime are very real and a present warning, but for those who come after us, so that they may remember the ills that this generation suffered and be always on their guard should any such menace spring up anywhere in the future. It is our hope that this recording will not be forgotten and that it will find its way into the schools of the country so that our children and our children's children will always remember that "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance."

Mr. Corwin conceived the whole broadcast in the spirit of the millions of "little men" who made up the armed forces of the United Nations and their parents and children and sweethearts who suffered so much and did so much to support the "little men" who fought and died in order that we might have a decent world to live in. The theme of the whole story is simplicity. Yes, simplicity, but that tense, dramatic simplicity that all may understand, and which touches a responding chord in the hearts of the common people, no matter of what race, religion or nationality. It tells how the GI's did the job, why they had to do it, and what they expect the world to do so that their children will not have another such frightful job to do.

*On a Note of Triumph* is worthy of a wide hearing now and the years to come. We sincerely hope that it will get it.

\* \* \*

*The Victor Book of Musical Fun.* By Ted Cott. 169 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$1.50.

Ted Cott, whose radio program "So You Think You Know Music" attracted a large number of listeners during its nearly three years on the air, has compiled this interesting and amusing little book. It is made up largely of a number of quizzes whose questions cover a wide range in the musical orbit. Interspersed are numerous clever cartoons and amusing anecdotes. The answers to each quiz are to be found at the end of the book with a method for scoring indicated.

The questions for the most part are not tricky and are ones that the average intelligent adult, with a reasonable knowledge of music, may not find too hard. However, we feel that

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anyone scoring seventy out of a possible one hundred should consider himself well versed in the subject.

We immediately see two uses for Mr. Cott's book. Anyone having a few hours of leisure could have a lot of fun and gain much useful musical knowledge by testing himself, and no matter how low his score was, he could not help keeping himself in rare good humor from the chuckles he is bound to get from the stories and cartoons. Also these quizzes are ideal for groups made up of persons who are interested in music. Mr. Cott offers an easy and pleasant way to garner a multitude of musical facts and have a lot of fun doing it.

\* \* \*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in **THE NEW RECORDS** are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

## ORCHESTRA



**Ravel: Daphnis et Chloé Suite No. 2.** Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-12" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-1. \$2.25.

About fifteen years ago Koussevitzky made a recording of this popular suite for Victor, and despite its age, we always preferred it to the several versions that were made available after it. These later versions were by Gaubert with the Straram Orchestra, Ormandy with the Philadelphia Orchestra, and Rodzinski with the Cleveland Orchestra. And now Koussevitzky presents his new recording. He selected this work to be the first to be recorded after the Petrillo ban. We rather feel that most critics will proclaim his present recording to be the definitive one. Ormandy's is brilliant, though at times superficial, Rodzinski's is musically solid but without much finesse, but Koussevitzky extracts the most from the score and his reading is exceptional in delicacy, shading and balance.

*Daphnis et Chloé*, a "choreographic symphony" in three parts, was written in 1910. Composed to a scenario by Fokine, it was produced at the Châtelet, Paris, in 1912, by the enterprising Diaghileff and his Ballet Russe. Later Ravel extracted two concert suites from the score of the ballet, the second of which is released this month.

Modern, and at the same time in the very best classic taste, this music presents Ravel at the peak of his creative career. His ability as an orchestrator,

his feeling for rich tonal coloring and his intoxicating melodies are all combined in this thrilling music. It is not only one of this composer's finest creations, but also one of the best works of the early twentieth century. Even die-hard classicists usually succumb to its spell after a few hearings.

This is an album that we can recommend to all and sundry without reservations of any kind. R.

**Gershwin—arr. Bennett: Porgy and Bess—A Symphonic Picture.** Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fabien Sevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-999. \$3.50.

For those who are not inclined to wade through the 14 sides of Decca's *Porgy and Bess* records, in which the original cast and stage version were used, this finely concentrated symphonic picture by Robert Russell Bennett—now apparently known as just Russel Bennett—will come in handy.

Mr. Bennett has orchestrated and streamlined the principal highlights from George Gershwin's well over 500-page folk-opera, on 6 record sides. Fabien Sevitzky and the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra have been enlisted to perpetuate Gershwin's melodies orchestrally, and Mr. Sevitzky and his men appear to be having a very good time as they run through this palatable arrangement with a degree of insouciance and attractive tone. All the principal numbers are present: *Summertime*, *Bess*, *You Is Mah Woman Now*, *I Got Plenty of Nottin'*, *It Ain't Necessarily So*, and *Dere's a Steamboat Leavin' for New York*. Perhaps Mr. Bennett's finale seems a little bombastic, a little over-elaborated, but on the whole his is an adroit piece of work. The indolent, primitive and charming atmosphere of *Catfish Row* is capitally presented. The recording is excellent, and there is no doubt that this *Symphonic Picture*, as Mr. Bennett calls it, will prove popular with a lot of people.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler with Jesus Maria Sanroma (piano). 2-12" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-3. \$2.25.

This famous recording of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* has had a varied career. It was first issued as two individual records (V-11822/3) in October 1935; later these records were placed in an album and re-issued as Victor Set M-358; and now they have been placed in an attractive folder and released as Victor Set SP-3.

It is said that this was Gershwin's favorite recording of his masterpiece, and, if that is so, it should need no other recommendation. Victor probably made the present release to greet the new Warner Brothers picture portraying the life of the greatly loved American composer, which is presently being shown in the first-run theatres. The title of the film and this selection are the same—*Rhapsody in Blue*.

**CHORAL**

**Gregorian Requiem Mass.** Choir of the Benedictine Monks of St. Benoit-du-Lac. 4-12" discs in album. \$7.

Those music lovers who are interested in Gregorian chant will welcome this splendid set of discs, we are very sure. This is the second album issued by this famous choir. The first containing some twenty-two chants, mostly from the *Liber Usualis*, was greeted with much enthusiasm and enjoyed a wide popularity among those persons who are interested in Catholic Church music. The present album, which was announced nearly a year ago and was just recently made available here in the United States, has been awaited with keen expectancy. We were not disappointed when we heard it and we do not believe that our readers will be either. The Choir of the Benedictine Monks of St. Benoit-du-Lac carry on in the tradition of Solemnes, and their fine carefully trained voices have been faithfully recorded on these discs. Their diction is well nigh perfect—each word of the Mass comes out crystal clear.

**VOCAL**

**Religious Songs.** Jeanette MacDonald (soprano) with Victor Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-996. \$2.75.

- 10-1168 *Nearer, My God, to Thee.*  
*Abide With Me.*
- 10-1169 *The Holy City.*  
*Agnus Dei.*
- 10-1170 *O Lord Most Holy.*  
*Battle Hymn of the Republic.*

There undoubtedly will be people who will want this little album of *Religious Songs* by Jeanette MacDonald, though it is hard to see just why. Songs of faith and religious belief need a far more solid and substantial voice, to be at all convincing, than the fluttery, unimportant tones at Miss MacDonald's disposal.

When one thinks of Caruso and Schumann-Heink's magnificent acoustical records of Bizet's *Agnus Dei*, Miss MacDonald's version seems so inconsequential as to be almost an impertinence. The singer again runs into unfavorable comparison with her shaky *Panis Angelicus* by Cesar Franck, for there are those of us who remember how a securely placed soprano voice can sound in this music, recalling Frances Alda's old recording.

Miss MacDonald is the last type of singer who should be enlisted to tackle such a composition as the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, which needs a voice of great mobility and breadth to come off at all, and the less said about Weatherly's *The Holy City*, the better. Though breathing audibly before each phrase, the soprano fares best in the two standard hymns, *Abide With Me* and *Nearer My God to Thee*.

The singer's lower tones are unsteady and breathy throughout, while her upper notes sound pinched and metallic. Miss MacDonald has made some decidedly pleasing and pretty records in the past, but the pretty approach is completely misplaced for music of this character, and we wonder at Victor's judgment in allowing Miss MacDonald to record an album of this sort, unless it foresaw that the singer's name coupled with the easy popularity of the above selections would be a commercially sound venture.

The Victor Chorus and an orchestra under the direction of Maximilian Pilzer give adequate and thoroughly conventional support.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Dix: The Trumpeter.** One side, and **Were You There** (Negro Spiritual). Richard Crooks (tenor) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-12" disc (V-11-8814). \$1.

As we listened to *The Trumpeter* our mind went back to the period of World War I when a glorious recording of this martial ballad was released, sung by John McCormack, then at the zenith of his career here in America. We have always been hoping that Richard Crooks would make a record of this piece and here it is. Our wish has come true and we are entirely satisfied with the rendition and the recording.

We rather wish that Mr. Crooks had given us a more simple rendition of the Negro spiritual *Were You There—When They Crucified My Lawd?* Also when Mr. Pilzer added a celesta to his accompanying orchestra he gave this recording a touch of Hollywood that is most inappropriate to say the least. Negro spirituals stem from the soil, and when you lift them into the ethereal with orchestra bells or a celesta, you take them entirely out of character and they lose their folksy charm.

**Berlin: Always.** One side, and **Kern: You Are Love** (from "Show Boat"). Grace Moore (soprano) with Victor Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Maximilian. 1-10" disc (V-10-1171). 75c.

Miss Moore left the musical comedy stage for grand opera a number of years ago, but she probably heard that Irving Berlin's *Always* was being revived and was in great demand, and so she decided to make a recording of it. She did and this disc is the result. In her rendition she is just too, too romantic—hums the chorus and everything. However, if we have a choice we'll take Dinah Shore. In *You are Love*, Miss Moore has the help of the Victor Chorus, which makes that side a bit more interesting.

**Mendelssohn:** *Fingal's Cave* (The Hebrides Overture, Op. 26). Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-8745). \$1.

Of the many recordings of this popular overture it would be safe to place this version at the head of the list. The fine Boston "Pops" Orchestra under the brilliant direction of Arthur Fiedler gives a performance that leaves little to be desired and the Victor recorders have achieved a most faithful reproduction.

Mendelssohn sketched this lovely work after having visited the famous caves at Staffa during a trip that he made to Scotland in 1829. In announcing this record, Victor states that a contemporary critic has described this fascinating selection as "a masterpiece of romantic imagination and romantic tone painting . . . it gives a wonderfully vivid impression of the surging sea, of waves resounding in rocky caves, of the harsh cry of the sea gulls, the odor of the salt air, the sharp flavor of the seaweed, and the melancholy soul of this northern scene." This unnamed critic may have a rather vivid imagination, but it is an interesting and colorful selection and one that most any music lover will find pleasing and enjoyable.

**Wagner: Lohengrin**—Prelude. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (V-11-8807). \$1.

This recently made recording will replace the earlier one made by Toscanini with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony. We cannot think of words that would adequately describe the near perfection that has been reached in producing this disc. Toscanini at his best—reproduction as nearly perfect as we have ever heard.

**Raksin:** Theme from "Laura" (from the 20th Century Fox picture "Laura"). One side, and **Tansman:** Scherzo (from the Universal picture "Flesh and Fantasy"). Janssen Symphony of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (V-11-8808). \$1.

Mood music from two popular movies nicely played by the Janssen Symphony. To those persons who have seen these pictures this music may bring back some thrilling memories. Amateur movie photographers will find this disc ideal for supplying background music for their films. The reproduction is excellent.

## OPERA

**Moussorgsky: Boris Godounov**—Excerpts. Ezio Pinza (bass) with Chorus of the Metropolitan Opera and orchestra conducted by Emil Cooper. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-563. \$5.50.

Last month Victor produced its *recordrama* of *Boris Godounov* with Alexander Kipnis and an all-Russian



background of chorus and supporting artists. This month Columbia projects its version—an Italian one—with Ezio Pinza and the Metropolitan Opera Association Chorus and orchestra under the direction of Emil Cooper. Unfortunately, much of the material is duplicated. Comparisons, naturally, are inevitable.

There is no doubt that the Victor performance is the more authentic. The Russian text suits the music, so national in its feeling, in a way that the Italian, or any other translation for that matter, cannot.

Alexander Kipnis, though he sings with less finesse than Pinza and with a less sensitive tone, doubtlessly also sounds more like the real article.

Despite all this, the Columbia performance is an unusually thrilling and living one—quite superbly recorded. The Metropolitan chorus sounds fuller and sings with far more impact than the Robert Shaw group, and the orchestra under Emil Cooper also sounds more voluminous and impressive than the Victor Symphony under the direction of Nicolai Berezhowsky. In fact, we don't know more thrilling choral singing on records than Columbia's complete version of the wonderful opening scene. To date, it is probably the finest recording yet made of a large and powerful choral body. The Coronation Scene further strengthens this impression, and produces an altogether overwhelming effect.

As for Mr. Pinza, his noble voice is used with great breadth and dignity, and his pianissimo is more supple than his Russian rival's. A good example of this is the finely spun note which tapers down to a mere whisper at the close of the Farewell addressed to Boris' son.

Mr. Pinza, like Mr. Kipnis, does not always come through unscathed on the highest notes. Neither of these bassos has the rock-like security in the upper voice that the astounding Chaliapin had. Nor is the drama completely realized in the Pinza version. We were a little disappointed in the Italian's handling of the Hallucination and Death scenes. The impression is of a fine, nobly sung performance which cannot quite escape the tang of conventionality. To obtain the ultimate thrill to be found in these towering moments we must still hark back to Chaliapin's wonderful records.

Mr. Pinza offers Pimenn's beautiful narrative, in which he describes a miracle near the tomb of the murdered Dimitri to the distracted Boris, as his extra number. Mr. Kipnis, instead, threw in the *Town of Kazan* for good measure. Also new in the Columbia album is an extract from one of the two Polish scenes—the dashing Polonaise, a choral and orchestral moment which occurs in the garden of Marina Mnichek.

Let us hope that either Columbia or Victor will follow up these in many ways magnificent performances with yet other albums from Moussorgsky's tremendous masterpiece. They are sorely needed. The wonderful Revolutionary Scene with the song

of the idiot, lamenting the fate of Russia, in the forest of Kromy, would indeed be welcome, and the lovely duet between Marina and Dimitri—the only truly lyrical moment of the score—would also be much appreciated.

There are other cherished passages from this unique opera, which would also appear to great advantage on records in a new and added volume or two. May we urge one of these companies to be further enterprising and get on the job? In the meantime we are profoundly thankful for the fine and much needed records just released.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

## PIANO



**Horowitz Program.** Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1001. \$3.50.

*Saint-Saëns:* Danse Macabre.

*Czerny:* Variations on the Aria "La Ricordanza," Op. 33.

*Tchaikovsky:* Dumka, Op. 59.

The feature of this album is Horowitz's own arrangement of the Liszt version of Saint-Saëns' well-known *Danse Macabre*. The great pianist has included this selection in several of his recent concerts and it has been acclaimed by both the critics and the public. It gives Horowitz ample opportunity to display the marvelous technique which is his—a brilliant showy piece of music that is bound to be greeted with thunderous applause. Not great music but fascinating to hear at the hands of an unquestioned master of the keyboard.

Of particular interest to us was the Czerny piece. We do not recall ever having heard any of his music before. We knew that he wrote many exercises for piano students which are still used by some teachers, but other than that we knew nothing of him. After listening to the Horowitz recording of his "Variations" we decided to learn something of the man. We find that he was a student of Beethoven and that the great master took an especial and rather paternal interest in him. He was an able and untiring teacher and had many brilliant and successful pupils, among them the great Franz Liszt. He was an indefatigable composer and nearly one thousand of his compositions were in print at his death in 1857. It appears that he went in more for quantity than quality and that is perhaps the reason that his works are generally disregarded by present-day musicians. We thought the present piece quite lovely and we enjoyed it thoroughly. Perhaps Horowitz will make a search for others if this one meets with public approval. We certainly hope so. We who listen to music practically every day of our life are always looking for new and worthwhile selections.

Just as we finished the last line in the preceding paragraph we realized that the third piece in this

album is just such a selection. As far as we know it has not been recorded before and we do not recall ever having heard it. Tchaikovsky's *Dumka* is based on folk tunes and is subtitled "A Russian Village Scene." It is not a work of any great importance but is pleasing enough in its modest way.

The present album is for the music lover who does not take his piano recordings too seriously—one who is satisfied to listen purely for enjoyment and who does not require too much mental stimulation.

R.

**Piano Music of Debussy.** Artur Rubinstein (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-998. \$3.50.

V-11-8773 Soirée dans Grenade.

Jardins sous la pluie.

V-11-8774 Reflets dans l'eau.

Hommage à Rameau.

V-11-8775 Poissons d'or.

La plus que lente—valse (1910).

Up until this time most record collectors when they thought of Rubinstein thought of Chopin, and when they thought of Debussy they thought of Giesecking, but from now on a great many of them will associate Debussy with Rubinstein. This present very fine album will be the cause of that change of thought. It proves definitely that one does not have to be a Frenchman to interpret the great French impressionist. It may be said with truth that Rubinstein does not have the French style of Giesecking, if by that one means that he does not have the French habit of slurring certain notes in a passage. Many music lovers prefer the French style and they will lean toward Giesecking's interpretation of Debussy. All may have their choice because Giesecking has already recorded several of the selections to be found in the present album. We prefer Rubinstein. To us it seems that he has caught the spirit of Debussy and his impeccable playing presents the music in a most acceptable and truly fascinating manner. Excellent piano reproduction is an added feature.

**Chopin: Polonaise in A flat, Op. 53, No. 6.** José Iturbi (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-8848). \$1.

Here is a record that the thousands of persons, who have seen the picture *A Song to Remember*, have been patiently waiting for — some not so patiently. This is the selection that runs through the picture, and as most everyone knows it was Iturbi who played the piano offstage for this production depicting the life of Chopin. Iturbi, of course, gives a brilliant performance, and the piano reproduction is of the best. Because of the lack of production at Victor, the only worry the dealers have about this record is that they will not receive enough to supply the demand of their customers. If you are interested it might be well to place your order with your dealer without delay.

**Loesser: Rodger Young.** One side, and Foggy, Foggy Dew. Sung by Burl Ives with rhythm accompaniment. 1-10" disc (D-23405). 75c.

John Charles Thomas gave us his version of the hill-billy ballad Rodger Young, and Nelson Eddy gave us his, but it remained for Burl Ives to give us the definitive rendition. Mr. Ives is supreme in this field. Foggy, Foggy Dew, which he sang with such success in the musical "Sing Out Sweet Land," occupies the second side of this disc.

## DICTION



**Voice of Franklin Delano Roosevelt** (A few quotations from his speeches). 1-10" disc (WOR-7-5100). 75c.

This little disc will be cherished by many Americans because it contains several important quotations from the speeches of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The first quotation is from his first inaugural address and the last from his report to Congress upon his return from Yalta, thus a period of some twelve years is covered. The quotations are, of course, brief, but they are highlights in the career of a great American.

**Langston Hughes Poems.** Langston Hughes (reader). 4-10" discs in album. Asch Set A-454. \$4.50.

The Negro poet, Langston Hughes, reads a number of his poems on these records. Some of them have been selected from his books, *The Weary Blues*, *The Dream Keeper*, and *Shakespeare in Harlem*; others in this collection have appeared in the magazines Poetry and Esquire; and some of the newer ones have not as yet been published. Mr. Hughes has a clear and easily understood diction and he reads his poems in a simple and unassuming manner. He has read many of these poems to audiences all over the country and his friends and admirers will doubtless welcome this opportunity to acquire recordings of them. Among the more than two dozen poems included in this album will be found three of his best known: *Mother to Son*; *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*; and *I, too, Sing America*.

## MISCELLANEOUS



**On a Note of Triumph.** (A CBS broadcast commemorating V-E Day). Martin Gabel (narrator) and supporting cast with orchestra conducted by Lud Gluskin. 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-575. \$6.50.

For a review of this album see the editorial columns of this issue.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost. C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Deca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.



## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

**Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death.** By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

**The Musical Scene.** By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

**Evenings With Music.** By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

**Adventures in Symphonic Music.** By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

**What We Hear in Music. (Twelfth Revised Edition.)** By Anne Shaw Faulkner. 704 pp. Illustrated RCA Victor Division (Camden, N. J.). Price \$2.25.

**This Modern Music.** By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

**The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.** George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

**The History of Music in Performance.** Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

**NOTE:** All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

*Issued Monthly by*

**H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY**

*"The World's Record Shop"*

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U.S.A.

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INDUSTRIES of all kinds are now feverishly planning for reconversion. It is thought possible that the Japanese war may end suddenly within a couple of months. It is pretty generally conceded that it will be over by the first of the year or shortly thereafter. Therefore it might be worth while for those who are interested in recorded music to consider what may happen in the record industry.

Shortly before the war Columbia reduced the prices of its records very drastically—in some cases they were cut in half. All of the 12-inch classical records were reduced to one dollar each. Victor very quickly followed suit. Whether this was a wise move on the part of these manufacturers is very much of a question. We rather feel that they have regretted it many times. Of course, the record collectors have no complaint for they have been able to buy records at these reduced prices ever since. The prices were frozen by OPA and that is that. The manufacturers cannot raise their prices at this time and so they have had to do the best they could. In the first place, they stopped pressing all but items that had a ready sale. Thus record collectors have been unable to add to their collections many recordings that they need to round out their libraries. In the second place, they concentrated on single records that did not require albums, and two-record sets were put in folders instead of albums. On two-record sets it is said that, at the present prices, there is not sufficient margin to take care of the cost of the album.

Strange as it may seem the Petrillo ban was a blessing to these manufacturers because during that time they closed their recording laboratories and nothing was paid to

musicians for making new records. They were selling all of the records they could produce and their costs were simply the cost of manufacture plus the royalties to those artists who receive them. All this has changed now. Their recording laboratories are running full swing and the musicians fees must be paid for each new recording. These fees run into big figures when one considers that the average symphony orchestra of today is composed of about ninety players.

Thus the record manufacturers are looking forward to the end of the war with anxious eyes. They are hoping for relief from OPA but hardly expect to get it until hostilities cease. If and when they get it, what action will they take? We hardly feel that anyone knows, but it might be interesting to make a few prophesies.

Probably the first thing that will be done will be to raise the price of symphony orchestra recordings. Certainly a recording of an orchestra of some ninety men directed by a world-famous conductor should bring a higher price than that of a single artist with piano accompaniment. The next thing that we look for is a "Connoisseur's Catalogue." This will contain items that do not have a wide general appeal and therefore, because of their limited sale, are not profitable to the manufacturers at the present prices. It is very possible that new items in this category will be issued in limited editions and by subscription. In the popular field the 35c record will be eliminated and the three-for-a-dollar children's records will be a thing of the past.

We believe that most farsighted record collectors will welcome these changes because we are sure that they realize that artistic rec-

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ords of high quality cannot be continually issued at prices that do not give the manufacturers a fair profit. And we believe that the manufacturers will not be foolish enough to raise the prices to the point that they will limit the sale of their records. The success of the record business depends upon wide distribution and only reasonable prices will insure this, therefore, there should be no worry on that score.

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in **THE NEW RECORDS** are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

## ORCHESTRA



**Strauss: Tod und Verklärung** (Death and Transfiguration). New York City Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1006. \$3.50.

This is the third time Dr. Leopold Stokowski has recorded Strauss' great tone-poem. His first was with the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1934, his second in 1942 with the All-American Youth Orchestra.

We are happy to report that his present recording, made with the New York City Symphony Orchestra, which he directed all last winter, is in every way a splendid achievement—one of the best that Stokowski has given us in a long time. The tone of the orchestra is rich and glowing and the impression is one of a depth and spaciousness well becoming music such as this.

Of course we can in advance read the phrases that numerous record reviewers will use in writing of this set: "Lushness"; "distortion"; "preoccupation with orchestral color"; "super-heated", etc., etc. If they didn't, they would not be in the fashion, for it has become increasingly, and many times unjustifiably, the style to damn everything that Stokowski does and to overlook his tremendous assets as a conductor.

After listening to this set, we came to the conclusion that there are few living conductors equipped to give a comparable performance of this particular kind. Stokowski understands the drama, the theatricality, the grandeur of Strauss' score, and the results are admirable.

Technically, this is the best of Stokowski's three versions, the best on records, though we admit the New York City Symphony cannot boast all the silkiness of the string section of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Debussy: Nocturnes**—1) *Nuages* and 2) *Fêtes*. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-247. \$2.50.

Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra continue their post-Petrillo activity with a recording of Debussy's lovely mood-pieces, *Nuages* and *Fetes*.

While granting the inestimable benefits of modern, thoroughly up-to-date recording for music of this type, we would nevertheless hesitate to place this album among Mr. Ormandy's most successful efforts. The reason for this conclusion is that Mr. Ormandy seems too straightforward and matter-of-fact, too lacking in the imagination, play of fancy and atmosphere that is the very soul of these pieces.

Not only is Mr. Ormandy too definite, but some of the solo instruments—notably the flute and the oboe—have been placed so near the microphone that they suddenly spring out at you from the orchestral fabric in a way that destroys the continuity of the mood. This is particularly true of *Nuages*, where the final *tremolando* of the contrabasses sounds like heavy thunder instead of a mere suggestion of a rumble.

Music of this sort is the counterpart of impressionism in painting, but one would hardly deduce this fact after hearing these sharply etched, definite sounds.

*Fêtes* is more successful, though the beginning of the procession which should sound like music "under glass" is not atmospheric enough. The break in the middle of the procession's *crescendo* is also disturbing.

Having pointed out what we do not like, we will admit that, technically speaking, the recording is unusually realistic; that all the instruments and effects are more clearly heard than ever before in records of this music, and that unless one is searching very fastidiously for a definitive performance of Debussy's *Nocturnes*, he will not go too far off center in acquiring this album. D.

**Gershwin: An American in Paris.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-246. \$2.50.

Recording companies are right on the trigger when it comes to seizing the psychology of the moment, and so, synchronizing with the appearance of the film *Rhapsody in Blue*, the celluloid biography of George Gershwin, several albums of the lamented American Apostle of the Roaring Twenties.

Most needed of these was the present album of Gershwin's symphonic poem *An American in Paris*, for there were only two very unsatisfactory versions of the work on records. Now Artur Rodzinski and the New York Philharmonic Symphony come across with a fine, up-to-date, sonorous version.

The music is among Gershwin's most characteristic and represents the wandering of a light-hearted Amer-

ican about Paris in those happy, bygone days before such things as collaborationists and the *Free French* were everyday expressions.

Here we find much of the tinsel of the French capital—its gaudy and at times wistful night life in Montmartre and Montparnasse; the glitter of the boulevards with their multiple taxi-horns. Through it all, our American friend clings with nostalgia to his nationality and it is ever through his American eyes that we view Paris.

The spirit of another era is caught on these surfaces, and Mr. Rodzinski and his forces give a rousing performance of a representative American work. D.

**Tchaikovsky: Mozartiana** (Suite No. 4 in G major, Op. 61). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-248. \$2.50.

It is a matter of record that Mozart was one of Tchaikovsky's favorite composers and that he always enjoyed playing his music. He said that it had a cheering effect upon him and tended to bring him out of his fits of melancholy. The present suite dates from 1887 and was first performed in November of that year at a concert in Moscow which the composer conducted. It was the first time that Tchaikovsky appeared in that city as a conductor.

*Mozartiana* is not Tchaikovsky's impression of Mozart but his orchestral arrangement of four Mozart pieces. Paul Affelder, in his notes that will be found on the inside cover of this album, gives an interesting detail of the pieces that the composer selected.

No one claims that this is a monumental work, but it is very pleasant to listen to, and Rodzinski provides a performance that is just about perfect. As there are no other recordings available of this work, it makes a very acceptable addition to the library of recorded music.

**Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue.** The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy with Oscar Levant (piano). Three sides, and **Gershwin: Preludes Nos. 2 and 3.** Oscar Levant (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-251. \$2.50.

Of the many recordings of Gershwin's famous *Rhapsody in Blue* that are now available, it would seem that the present one by Oscar Levant and the Philadelphia Orchestra will take its place at the top of the list. There are several reasons for this. In the first place, Mr. Levant plays it with great success in the new Gershwin movie and many persons who will see the picture will want the version that they heard. In the second place, Oscar Levant, being an intimate friend of the composer's, is naturally associated with his works. And there is another very good reason—Levant gives a grand performance and the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy supplies splendid support. And last, but by no means least, Columbia has produced a brilliant and most faithful recording.

Just in passing, we might remark that this is not the first time that Oscar Levant has recorded the *Rhapsody in Blue*. In the early days of electrical recording, Brunswick issued a version of it by Mr. Levant and an orchestra directed by Frank Black.

**Gershwin—arr. Bennett: Porgy and Bess**—A Symphonic Picture. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-572. \$3.50.

Last month Victor released its recording of Mr. Bennett's arrangement of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* played by the Indianapolis Symphony conducted by Sevitzky, and Mr. de Schauensee's review of it appeared in our July issue. It is now simply a question as to whether you prefer that version or the present Columbia recording by the Pittsburgh Symphony conducted by Fritz Reiner. We have just listened to both sets and as far as we are concerned it is six of one and a half dozen of the other.

**Oriental—Authentic Music of the Near East.** The Kornienko Ensemble. 4-10" discs in album. Kis-met Set D-85. \$4.50.

We certainly cannot vouch for the authenticity of these recordings. They give us the impression of music that one might hear in the night clubs of the larger cities of the Near East—perhaps the tunes themselves are authentic but the little orchestra with its piano supplying the bass rhythm sounds more like Coney Island than Bagdad. Copious notes on each selection will be found on the inside of the back cover of this album, but they don't help very much because we cannot reconcile these notes with the recordings themselves.

**Johann Strauss Waltzes.** Robert Stoltz and his orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set 392. \$3.50.

Robert Stoltz, the popular Viennese composer and conductor, he of *Two Hearts in Three-Quarter Time* fame, presents several Strauss waltzes in strict time for dancing. These performances may be all right for dancing, but they seem mighty dull to us, and lack that sparkle that we always associate with Strauss waltzes. Mr. Stoltz's orchestra is nothing to boast of and is not to be compared with the orchestra that Marek Weber uses for his famous recordings of these waltzes. We looked forward to something very fine from Mr. Stoltz and were greatly disappointed.

The selections included in this album are: *Blue Danube*; *Tales from the Vienna Woods*; *Emperor Waltz*; *You and You*; *Wine, Women and Song*; *Artist's Life*; *Southern Roses*; and *Vienna Blood*.

**Roumanian Fantasy.** Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (C-7427-M). \$1.

The label does not tell us anything about this one. We presume that Kostelanetz has made this arrangement of Roumanian folk tunes, and if he did so, he is to be congratulated on a rather good job. Kostelanetz is at his best in music of this character, and the Columbia recorders have reproduced it with a nice regard for balance and fidelity.

**Bach—arr. Gounod: Ave Maria.** One side, and **Schubert: Ave Maria.** The Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-10" disc (D-23424). 75c.

Both of these well-beloved selections are played with dignity and reverence by Los Angeles Philharmonic under the able direction of Alfred Wallenstein. Many recorded versions of these pieces are available but this record at its modest price is worthy of consideration. The reproduction is excellent.

## VOCAL

**Villa-Lobos: Seréstas** (Brazilian Serenades) and **Sino de Aldeia** (Miniatura No. 6). (Sung in Portuguese). Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Heitor Villa-Lobos. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-249. \$2.50.

Columbia introduces a really important new vocal artist and personality this month—Jennie Tourel. Miss Tourel, a member of the Metropolitan Opera Association, has appeared on that stage as *Carmen* and *Mignon*, and as *Adalgisa* in Bellini's "Norma." She has also given some immensely successful song recitals in New York. We have heard Miss Tourel in both these mediums, and while she is a finished operatic performer, we feel that her outstanding contribution to music is on the concert stage. Such an artist generally makes for a fine success in recorded performances, which is definitely the case here.

Playing through this album of Villa-Lobos *Seréstas* (serenades) we were deeply conscious of the consummate artistry of the singer, the distinction of her vocalism and the infinite care she bestows on every musical detail. This struck us all the more forcibly when we thought of the fact that most of our American singers—Grace Moore, Dorothy Kirsten, Risë Stevens, Gladys Swarthout, James Melton, John Charles Thomas and others—have been wasting their time and ours by recording selections from the musical-show and night-club world.

Miss Tourel makes her recording debut with this unusual set of five serenades and one musical miniature by Villa-Lobos. The music is not every-day fare. It is exotic, stimulating and provocative of further delving into such things.

Villa-Lobos wrote 12 *seréstas* during the eight years that he spent in Paris. The sophistication of the French capital is shown in the shrewdly effective orchestral accompaniments which really supply the main atmosphere of the compositions. Brazilian rhythms and native melodies form the basis of Villa-Lobos' brilliant accomplishment, in which one finds an intriguing blend of the Old World and the New.

The most attractive of these songs, to our ears, is the opening one, *Modinha*, a love-song filled with caressing languor and sultry yearning. The *Song of the Ox Cart Driver* is also arresting with its picture of the heavy wagons pounding deep through the

steaming brush of the Brazilian forests. *April* with its tumultuous orchestral opening, suggestive of a spring storm, is another charming musical panel. *In the Peace of Autumn* (near the end of record two) suffers from poor recording; just why, we cannot say. On the last record side we find the brief and charming *Desire*, and the one musical miniature, *The Village Bell*, with its silvery orchestration.

Just how important Villa-Lobos' music is, will be judged and decided by the passage of time. But there is no doubt as to the art and musical intelligence, the instrumental quality of Miss Tourel's singing. Sometimes she reminds one of a disciplined edition of Marguerite D'Alvarez, but our new recording star also emerges with a personality strongly her own.

We feel that Miss Tourel is setting a good example to other singers with this fine-grained and altogether exotic album. We hope that her distinguished interpretations will stimulate others to forsake their commercial ways.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Rodgers: Carousel** (Selections from the Theatre Guild musical play). Members of the Original New York Production with Carousel Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Joseph Littau. 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-400. \$5.50.

Decca's outstanding contribution to recorded music has been its albums of operettas sung by the original cast, thus preserving much of the original atmosphere and flavor of the show. Other recording companies come across with albums of the same operettas in which they are apt to enlist glamor names from the operatic and celebrity world, but the unique charm and appeal of the Decca sets is missing.

Following hard on the albums with original production of *Porgy and Bess*, *This is the Army*, *Winged Victory*, *One Touch of Venus*, *Mexican Hayride*, *Oklahoma!* and *Bloomer Girl*, comes Richard Rodgers latest, *Carousel*. Based on Ferenc Molnar's distinguished play and transplanted from Budapest to the New England of the '70s, Mr. Rodgers has found time for some pretty and likeable music.

We have not seen the show. Doubtlessly, if we had, we would be able to identify the different tunes with the characters and situations. Hearing this score "cold," we have the impression that except for *June is Bustin' Out All Over*, *If I Loved You*, and the most attractive and effective *Soliloquy*, that Mr. Rodgers is lacking in the musical inspiration and spontaneity he found for *Oklahoma!* His first song, *You're A Queer One*, Julie Jordan seems more than a little indebted to Verdi's *Parigi, o cara* duo from *La Traviata*, nor does Mr. Rodgers make you feel New England in his music.

Nevertheless there is enough to allow many enjoyable moments, and the cast projects it with an enthusiasm and belief in what it is doing which is positively contagious. John Raitt, the production's

Billy, has a grand baritone voice, alive and virile. He is heard to great advantage in the long and engaging *Soliloquy*. Another outstanding voice is Christine Johnson's sparkling mezzo-soprano, to whom falls by far the best song of the show, *June is Bustin' Out All Over*. Miss Johnson puts this very attractive number over with a dewy freshness, a youthful shimmer of voice that will make you want to hear it many times.

The company's tenor, Eric Mattson, has an excellent voice and his *When the Children are Asleep* is another highspot. As the heroine, Julie, Jan Clayton's voice is sweet but painfully thin. Doubtlessly, Miss Clayton should be seen as well as heard; she sounds as though she should.

*This Was a Real Nice Clambake, Mister Snow, There's Nothin' So Bad for a Woman, What's the Use of Wondrin', The Highest Judge of All, and You'll Never Walk Alone* have all been recorded on these 10 twelve-inch sides. It is not really so much Mr. Rodgers' music as the enthusiasm and almost "first night" quality of this thoroughly attractive cast and chorus which impressed us as we reached the final record in the album. You will certainly not go wrong in acquiring the set.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Brahms: Cradle Song** (Wiegenlied, Op. 49, No. 4). One side, and **Reger: The Virgin's Slumber Song** (Maria Wiegenlied from Op. 76). Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) with Victor String Orchestra conducted by Macklin Marrow. 1-10" disc (V-10-1173). 75c.

Blanche Thebom, who has recently signed a contract with the Metropolitan Opera, has selected two lovely lullabies for her first Victor record. The familiar and universally beloved one of Brahms' and the equally attractive, but less well-known one of Reger's, are coupled on this charming disc. Both are sung in English. Miss Thebom's smooth flowing mezzo-soprano voice is heard to advantage in these selections.

**Rodgers: What's the Use of Wond'r'in'**. Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano) with Al Goodman and his Orchestra. One side, and **Rodgers: You'll Never Walk Alone**. Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano) and Thomas L. Thomas (baritone) with Al Goodman and his Orchestra and Chorus. 1-10" disc (V-10-1175). 75c.

**Rodgers: June is Bustin' Out All Over**. Thomas L. Thomas (baritone) with Al Goodman and his Orchestra and Chorus. One side, and **Rodgers: If I Love You**. Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano) and Thomas L. Thomas (baritone) with Al Goodman and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1174). 75c.

This pair of discs contain the four top tunes from the big New York success "Carousel." Miss Merriman and Mr. Thomas, with the assistance of an adequate

chorus and orchestra, present these melodies in a highly satisfactory manner. The nice way in which their voices blend in the duets is worthy of a special note of praise. For those persons who do not feel that they wish to invest in the complete recording of "Carousel," which Decca is releasing this month, these records will be of especial interest.

**Schwartz: You and the Night and the Music**. One side, and **Youmans: Time on My Hands, You in My Arms**. Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by H. Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (V-11-8813). \$1.

The charming Nan Merriman, who is known to many thousands of radio listeners through her appearances on NBC's "Serenade to America" program, offers these two popular melodies on her first Victor record. Miss Merriman has a well-trained and most pleasing voice, and her renditions of these selections will surely please those persons who are interested in sentimental songs of this character.



## CONCERTO

**Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 4 in C minor, Op. 44.** Robert Casadesus (piano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-566. \$3.50.

This, the fourth of Saint-Saëns' five piano concerti, was composed during 1875 and was first heard on October 31st of that year. It was then presented at a concert of the Colonne Orchestra at the Theatre du Chatelet in Paris. The composer performed the solo part with the usual thundering success that always greeted his appearance as pianist.

The Concerto No. 4 in C Minor is unusual in that it avoids the usual conventional divisions and is written in two long movements. Saint-Saëns made a similar departure from accepted forms in his Symphony No. 3 in C Minor and his Sonata for Violin and Piano.

The concerto opens with some halting phrases reminiscent of orchestra effects in the composer's *Samson et Dalila*. Later Saint-Saëns indulges in some flowing ornamental passage work, but the movement ends quietly. The second movement opens with a sparkling Scherzo, followed by a brief Andante. The finale of the concerto is of the utmost and breathtaking brilliance.

While there is already an excellent recording of this work by Alfred Cortot and an orchestra conducted by Charles Munch (V-M367), it will be forced to bow to this new and technically superior accomplishment. Furthermore, Robert Casadesus gives the concerto an altogether personal and idiomatic performance, nor must we forget Artur Rodzinski and the N. Y. Philharmonic, who are in tip-top form. Mr. Casadesus plays the difficult finale with a nimbleness of execution which is a delight. D.

**PIANO**

**Franck: Prelude, Chorale and Fugue.** Artur Rubinstein (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1004. \$2.50.

Franck's *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue* was written in 1884, and first heard in public at a concert of the Société Nationale given in January of the following year. Mme. Marie Poitevin was the soloist. It is a work which in construction, thematic development, polyphony, command of keyboard technique, and above all in sustained musical interest, that is among the masterpieces of pianoforte literature. It was Franck's intention to write a prelude and fugue in the style of Bach. The chorale was an afterthought. The organist of St. Clotilde always showed a decided interest in the constructional side of music, so it is not surprising to find that what was intended to be a mere prelude and fugue developed into a work of such scope and complexity of form as to surpass in compass the average sonata. This impellent structure is in point of fact an epitome of the Franckian mood and method.

Excellent recordings of this work have been made by Alfred Cortot and Egon Petri, but if we were asked to make our choice, we would select the present version by Artur Rubinstein. Please remember that this is a personal preference and one that we could not back up with any definite arguments. R.

**Debussy—Selections.** Gaby Casadesus (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Asch Set DM-103. \$4.50.

For those lovers of Debussy's piano music who would like Mme. Casadesus to slip quietly into their music room and play for them a few selections in a modest and unaffected manner, this album will be ideal. As one listens to these recordings, he does not have the slightest feeling that he is attending a formal concert. He rather feels that Mme. Casadesus is playing just for him and a few of his friends.

Although Mme. Casadesus is overshadowed in the public's mind by her distinguished husband, she is an able pianist in her own right, and we are sure that many music lovers will join us in welcoming these recordings of her art. Her tone is not large but it has a very pleasant singing quality and her technique is impeccable. Asch has achieved splendid piano reproduction.

The selections that Mme. Casadesus has chosen for this collection are: *Two Arabesques; Sérénade à la poupee* and *Golliwog's Cake Walk* from *Children's Corner Suite*; and these Preludes from Book I—*La fille aux cheveux de lin, Minstrels, Voiles* and *La sérénade interrompue*. R.

**BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST**

**The Victor Book of Musical Fun.** By Ted Cott. 169 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$1.50.

**Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death.** By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

**The Musical Scene.** By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

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**The History of Music in Performance.** Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

**NOTE:** All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

*Issued Monthly by*

**H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY**

*"The World's Record Shop"*

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THE big news this month is the announcement of the RCA Victor Red Seal De Luxe Record! From Victor's press release of 30 August 1945, we quote the following: "The first non-breakable, high fidelity phonograph record for home use has been developed by RCA Victor, climaxing 11 years of research work in this field . . . the greatest improvement in home phonograph records in 45 years . . . The non-breakable home phonograph record, which is ruby red in color, was made possible by the development of a formula for a compound composed almost entirely of vinyl resin plastic which produces a durable, long-life record . . . The new formula results in a record that can be dropped or bent without breaking or cracking, has less surface sound, and enhances the fidelity of reproduction . . . Surface sound reduction is made possible because the plastic compound does not require the mineral filler used in shellac records . . . extensive tests have demonstrated that they can be played on practically all types of home phonographs, including those equipped with automatic changers, and with varied types of needles . . . RCA Victor will not discontinue its production of the standard Red Seal and Victor popular shellac records . . . a still finer recorded performance than that possible on the best shellac records."

These are the manufacturer's statements made after exhaustive tests in the laboratory, and our concern is as to how they will stand up when these records are given the only real test — use in the hands of the public at large.

In the first place there is no question as to the excellence of the reproduction. The samples that we have heard establish that

fact. We have never heard more faithful recording on any record. The lack of surface noise is evident immediately you start to play the new disc. It is certainly non-breakable—you can bend it, sit on it, or drop it—also, a very important point, it will not warp permanently. By that we mean, that if the record is held in a bent position for some time and then released, it will very shortly assume its original flat condition. By the same token, if the record comes out of its mold in a warped or cupped condition nothing you can do will straighten it again. It is a property of this plastic that it always tends to assume the shape in which it comes from its mold. Care must be taken in the manufacture of these records to see that they are perfectly flat when they come from the machines.

Now as to wearing qualities—we all know that radio transcriptions have been made on plastic records for years and that they have given as many or more plays than the best shellac records. However, it is our experience that all plastic records should be played with either a sapphire or a Recoton Superior needle.

So far it would seem that nearly all of the claims made by RCA Victor will hold when the Red Seal De Luxe records reach their final test in the hands of the public. All except the claim that they will play on most automatic phonographs, and this claim can quickly be made good by making the new records the same thickness as the regular shellac ones. In view of the fact that there are no automatic phonographs in the hands of the dealers at the present time, we had to take our samples around to the homes of some of

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our friends for trial on their instruments, and the result, which of course is in no way conclusive, because of the small number of instruments used, was, because the new record is so much thinner than the record for which the changers were designed, that it only worked successfully on about half of the instruments.

We do not feel that Victor's statement that this is "the greatest improvement in home phonograph records in 45 years" is in any way an exaggeration. To have an unbreakable, unwarpable, quiet surface, highest fidelity record, that properly used will last indefinitely, is something that record collectors have been wishing most earnestly for ever since records were first made some fifty years ago. It apparently is here. Our hearty congratulations to RCA Victor for being the first company to make it generally available for use on the phonographs in our homes.

\* \* \*

Recently we have heard from a number of our former readers who have returned to their homes; some of them have been in the armed forces and others have been employed in war work in various parts of the country. It seems that one of the first things that they want to do is to check up on the recordings that have been made available while they were away. Requests for back copies of **THE NEW RECORDS** have been numerous.

It would seem from the number of these requests that a great many of our readers are keeping a complete file of these little bulletins. Such a file would contain a listing and review of all of the classical recordings that have been released in America during the last twelve years, or to be exact since March 1933, and in addition most of the important foreign recordings.

It occurs to us that some of our new readers, or those of our older readers who did not save their copies, might like to have such a file, while back copies are still available. The present issue is the 151st and all except eleven numbers are available. The missing numbers are all prior to 1941. We shall be glad to send the 140 available issues to any address

postpaid upon receipt of five dollars. Single copies may be had at 5c each or a complete volume of twelve issues for 50c. Each volume began with the March issues.

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in **THE NEW RECORDS** are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

### ORCHESTRA



Bax: **Symphony No. 3.** The Hallé Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli. 6-12" discs (V-C-3380 to V-C-3385) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (V-C-7593 to V-C-7598). \$11.40.

Despite the fact that Bax is considered by many to be the greatest living British composer, he is comparatively little known here in America, and so a brief biographical sketch might not be out of order. Sir Arnold Edward Trevor Bax was born in London in 1883. He was an outstanding student at the Royal Academy during 1900-05, studying principally with Corder and Matthay. He has never held any paid position in the musical field and has never appeared in public as either a conductor or pianist, although it is said that he is an excellent performer. His whole adult life has been devoted to composition, with well over one hundred works to his credit, among which are seven symphonies. He has written in the various forms but is noted especially for his works for orchestra and his chamber music. In 1931 he received the Gold Medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society, and in 1934 the honorary degree of Mus. Doc. was bestowed upon him by Oxford University. He was knighted in 1937.

Bax's **Symphony No. 3**, which has been so splendidly recorded by the Hallé Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli, was dedicated to Sir Henry Wood, and was first performed under the direction of that brilliant conductor, March 3, 1930. Like the other Bax symphonies, it is in three movements instead of the conventional four, with the third movement containing an epilogue. It is heavily scored using all of the usual instruments of the symphony orchestra, and in addition, the celesta, tenor drum, side drum, glockenspiel, zylophone, anvil, gong, and tambourine. This great mass of sound is at first confusing to say the least, and it would be an astute listener who could get much from this work upon the first hearing. It would seem that Bax is continually afraid of becoming banal, for no sooner does he begin what seems to promise to be an engaging melody that off he goes into a great crash of resounding chords that drive the pleasing melody from our ears. In order to appreciate this work one must look upon it as a whole; it is very

easy to get so close to the trees that one misses the beauty of the forest. Some critics seem to think that Bax has been influenced by Sibelius. He may have been but we fail to notice any trace of that influence in the present work.

We found this symphony thoroughly invigorating and spiritually stimulating and we want to hear it again and again, for we are sure that as we become better acquainted with it, we will find more and more to enjoy and appreciate. That is the great advantage of having a new work, such as this, available in a well-recorded version. One may hear it at appropriate intervals, and when one is in the mood to absorb and evaluate its musical content.

**Schönberg: Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4.** (Music for the ballet "Pillar of Fire"). Seven sides, and Corelli—trans. Filippi: Adagio. St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1005. \$4.50.

We remember the furor among record collectors when the first, and by the way the only recording till now, of Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht* was recorded by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra under the then little-known conductor Eugene Ormandy. This version was released by Victor in June, 1934. For years collectors who were interested in Schönberg had been asking for a recording of his first important composition. Finally it arrived and many hearts were made glad. Both the performance and the recording were considered good and so everybody was pleased.

About three years ago the Ballet Theatre presented its first performance of *Pillar of Fire*, a new ballet by the English choreographer, Antony Tudor, using the *Verklärte Nacht* music. Almost immediately there was a demand for a new recording of the work. This month Victor supplies that demand with this spirited performance by the St. Louis Symphony conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. Those who have the Ormandy version may hesitate to forsake their first love, but those who are interested in the music of *Pillar of Fire* will probably prefer this very excellent modern recording.

For those who are not familiar with the work, a few remarks about it might not be amiss. It dates from 1899 and was originally for string sextet, later it was arranged for string orchestra. It was the first composition of the young Schönberg, he was twenty-five years of age when he wrote it, to receive any widespread public notice. Today, in the light of the composer's daring experiments and innovations during the last thirty years, this work, showing as it does the strong influence of Wagner, Brahms and Mahler, particularly the first named, may seem quite reactionary. However, it was considered a radical departure from established musical form by the conservative critics who heard it upon its first performance.

R.

**Barber: Symphony No. 1, Op. 9** (in one movement). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-252. \$2.50.

Record collectors have been pretty sharp in their criticism of the manufacturers, since the lifting of the Petrillo ban, for devoting most of their production to re-recording the old war horses. It would seem, therefore, that they should applaud Columbia's enterprise in providing the first recording of this symphony by one of America's most talented young composers. In taking the step, Columbia did not go halfway. A work that has been well received by the public and which has appeared on the programs of the leading orchestras in both Europe and America was chosen. The great Philharmonic-Symphony under one of the world's most distinguished conductors was selected, and the composer was invited to supervise the recording. The Columbia technicians brought their finest skill into play to insure perfect reproduction and achieved their aim. We are sure that nothing more could have been done to insure an acceptable new item for inclusion in the repertory of recorded music, and now Columbia is very properly waiting with an applause meter to see if those collectors, who are always wanting to know why living composers are not given a chance in the catalogues of the American record manufacturers, when so much modern music is made available on records abroad, are really in earnest. Columbia's applause meter reads very accurately, for it registers the number of these albums that are sold. With that reading it is an easy matter to compare that figure with the cost of the recording and tell instantly whether this has been a successful venture or whether it is more profitable to continue to record over and over again the symphonies of the old masters, which so many persons buy at sight, even if they have an older recording of the same work already in their collections.

So much space has been devoted to the above diatribe that there is little left for a consideration of the composer or his present work. However, Samuel Barber is perhaps as well known as any living American composer, and his *Symphony No. 1* has been heard a number of times in this country. Both the composer and his work are carefully considered by Paul Affelder, who supplies the excellent notes that will be found on the inside cover of this album.

R.

**Strauss—arr. Dorati: Der Rosenkavalier—Suite.** Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-997. \$3.50.

Several orchestral versions of this most popular modern opera have been made. Strauss, himself, made one in 1926 for the picture *The Rose Cavalier*. The present version is by the well-known ballet

conductor Antal Dorati. This suite is not to be confused with *Waltz Movements* (*Rosenkavalier Waltz*) which is a concert work made up of the various waltz passages running throughout the opera, of which there are numerous recordings, the best of which is probably the one by the Cleveland Orchestra under Rodzinski.

The present suite depicts musically the following scenes: Octavian and Marchallin; The Silver Rose: Octavian and Sophie; The Intrigue; Baron Ochs von Lerchenau; Scandal and Solution: Terzett and Closing Duet; and Résumé: Great Waltz. It is great music to listen to and is much more enjoyable if one knows something of the plot of the opera. Victor realized this and so a very interesting story of the action is given on the inside cover of this album. If you have seen the opera, we suggest that you refresh your memory by glancing over the story before you play these discs, if you are not familiar with the plot it might be well to keep the text before you as you listen.

Eugene Goossens gives a fine spirited performance and the reproducing is first-class.

**Brahms: Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90.** Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1007. \$4.50.

Surely there should be no question of anyone securing a recording of Brahms' *Third* to suit his individual taste. There have been at least six recordings made of it before the present one. The following conductors has each offered his version: Weingartner, Bruno Walter, Stock, Kindler, Mengelberg and Stokowski. The Mengelberg and Stokowski recordings are very old ones, but the others are more or less modern. However, if Victor were to be asked why Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony had been commissioned to make another, the answer would probably be to listen to it and judge for yourself. And that might not be a bad answer, for certainly the present version is equal to any that has gone before, and if a poll were taken, it would not surprise us a bit if the Koussevitzky version headed the list. If you are thinking of adding Brahms' *Third* to your library, by all means listen to the recording of it that Victor is releasing this month.

**Grétry: Céphale et Procris (Airs de Ballet).** Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw. 1-12" disc (V-11-8825). \$1.

This ballet suite is probably a favorite of M. Defauw, as we recall that he made a recording of it with the Brussels Conservatory Orchestra circa 1931. This version was re-pressed by Columbia and released in America in September 1937. It enjoyed a moderate sale but has since been dropped from the catalogue. Although the Victor label does not indicate it, we presume that the present version was orchestrated by Mottl, as was the previous one.

André Ernest Modeste Grétry was born at Liège in 1741 and died in Paris in 1813. Greatly honored and immensely popular in his day, Grétry was the composer of numerous light operas. His chief merit as a composer lies in his uncommon gift for producing striking, well-turned melodies. Grétry's musical knowledge was defective in several respects, and he had a very meagre grasp of harmony. Termed the "Molière of music" by his contemporaries, he is said to have founded the school of French comedy-opera, to which Boieldieu, Auber and Adam later made many important contributions. *Céphale et Procris*, now all but forgotten, was produced in 1775. The tunes from it given here are lacking in distinction, but they make fairly pleasant listening.

M. Defauw seems to be thrilled with the music that he is producing and his enthusiasm is contagious. The reproduction is superb. R.

**Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28.** Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-12" discs in album. Victor Set V-1. \$4.50.

Victor Set V-1 (DV-1 automatic sequence) is the first album of the new Victor Red Seal De Luxe records—the flexible, non-breakable record with the smooth quiet surface which is described in some detail in the editorial on page 1 of this issue. We do not hesitate to say that it is the finest reproduction we have ever heard. This album will be available at your dealer's about October first. He very likely has a sample disc from the album on hand now, and if you are interested in the new developments in the record industry, you will find it worth while to stop in his shop and listen to it.

The marvelous Boston Symphony under the distinguished direction of Koussevitzky gives just the brilliant performance that you would expect from that superb organization.

**Walton: Spitfire Prelude and Fugue** (from the film "First of the Few"). The Hallé Orchestra conducted by William Walton. 1-12" disc (V-C-3359). \$1.90.

William Walton, the very talented modern English composer, whose *Belshazzar's Feast* met with such hearty approval when the recording of it by the Liverpool Philharmonic was released several months ago, supplied the music for the very successful English movie *First of the Few*. If the present recording is indicative of the music as a whole, the picture must have been worthy of attention if only for the musical background. We were very much impressed with this disc and have played it many times since it arrived from England. We feel sure that our readers will thrill to this poignant music. A lovely passage for solo violin in the Fugue adds to the attractiveness of that section of the work. Laurence Turner is the very able violinist. The reproduction is well up to the high standard set by the English recorders.

**Hour of Charm**—Favorite Melodies. Hour of Charm All Girl Orchestra and Choir conducted by Phil Spitalny. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set C-108. \$2.50.

The many thousands of listeners who enjoy the "Hour of Charm" program on the radio each week will certainly welcome this album. Phil Spitalny's All Girl Orchestra has been gaining steadily in popularity each year, and the former album they made for Columbia has enjoyed an ever-increasing sale since it was first issued. That album contained a number of sacred selections and was entitled "Hymns." The present album includes recordings of the following selections: *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*; *National Emblem March*; *Onward Christian Soldiers*; *The Lord's Prayer*; *The Rosary*; *Love's Old Sweet Song*; *Ave Maria*; and *The Lost Chord*.

**Kostelanetz Conducts.** Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-574. \$4.50.

C-7428-M *Stardust*. *Blues in the Night*.

C-7429-M *St. Louis Blues*. *Manhattan Serenade*.

C-7430-M (1) *Sophisticated Lady*. (2) *Solitude*.  
*Mood Indigo*.

C-7431-M *Stormy Weather*. *When Day Is Done*.

Kostelanetz fans are just about going to go crazy over this album. It is the Maestro at his best in tunes that just fit his style. If he will just stick to fare like this his vast army of admirers will be tickled skinny and it will be all right with us too. It's great stuff and the reproduction is tops.

**Butterworth: A Shropshire Lad**—Rhapsody. The Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (V-C-3287). \$1.90.

This imported disc was reviewed in the March 1945 issue of THE NEW RECORDS. The few copies that were received in the first shipment from England were immediately sold. Another shipment has just arrived and so we are re-listing this important record this month.

**Gershwin**:—Selections. Billy Butterfield and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Capitol Set B-D 10. \$2.50.

CL-20025 *Someone to Watch Over Me*.  
*Oh Lady Be Good*.

CL-20026 *Somebody Loves Me*.  
*Nice Work If You Can Get It*.

CL-20027 *Maybe*.  
*It Ain't Necessarily So*.

CL-20028 *They Can't Take That Away From Me*.  
*Do It Again*.

While some of the top symphony orchestras of the country are producing recordings of Gershwin's music in their idiom, Billy Butterfield, the nationally known jazz trumpeter, slips in with a flock of Gershwin

favorites in his. He is assisted by some swell vocalists, including Johnny Mercer and Margaret Whiting. Some folks think that Gershwin sounds much better when played by a small ensemble of good jazz musicians; for them this album is a natural.

## CHORAL



**Songs of Devotion.** Fred Waring Glee Club and Orchestra. 5-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-393. \$3.

D-18678 *Ave Maria* (Bach-Gounod).  
*Now the Day is Over*.

D-18679 *Holy, Holy, Holy*.  
*This is My Father's World*.

D-18680 *Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen*.  
*Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child*.

D-18681 *Faith of Our Fathers*.  
*Blest Be the Tie That Binds*.

D-18682 *Onward, Christian Soldiers*.  
*Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

When we listen to these records let us forget that we are Methodists, Episcopalians or Catholics or any other denomination. For, if we are devout members and bred in the traditions of any of these sects, these renditions will sound strange to us. Let us not condemn Mr. Waring's arrangements of these well-known hymns because they are not sung as we are used to hearing them. If these sacred selections are a part of our life, we will prefer them sung in the manner in which we have always heard them, and there are other recordings of them which we may select.

However, there are hundreds of thousands of Americans who never attend any religious services, and we think that Mr. Waring had this vast multitude in mind when he made these arrangements for his broadcasts. He dressed these old hymns up to catch their ears and judging from the great popularity of his Glee Club, we would say that he has succeeded in doing so to a marked degree. The real point is—has he been sincere in what he has done? Has he approached his task reverently? We certainly feel that he has. We are glad, for if he had taken these old hymns, that mean so much to so very many devout persons, and added a few frills to make them commercially profitable, he would deserve nothing but condemnation and he would surely get it from us.

If by what he has done, he brings to some listeners, who might not otherwise be reached, the simple message of the Prince of Peace, he has accomplished something worth while. Certainly this war-torn world might well turn its attention to this simple message, for all other methods of maintaining peace have failed utterly, and in our humble opinion will fail again. Only a great spiritual revival will save civilization, and the slightest move in that direction is worthy of the support of all those who daily hope and pray for universal peace.

R.

## CONCERTO



**Bliss: Concerto for Pianoforte and Orchestra.** Solomon (piano) and Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Available in automatic sequence only. 5-12" discs (V-C-7583 to V-C-7587) in album. \$9.50.

Arthur Bliss' *Concerto for Pianoforte and Orchestra* was commissioned by the British Council for the British Week at the New York World Fair, and was first performed in Carnegie Hall, June 10, 1939, by Solomon and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. It was dedicated by the composer to the people of the United States. It is certainly no left-handed compliment to have such a dynamic and full-blooded work dedicated to us. It was well received at its first performance and the great Solomon has played it numerous times in England with steadily growing success. It is a most difficult work for the pianist but the present soloist masters it with seemingly little difficulty. The majestic final movement requires great power and a virility of the highest order. Solomon has these qualities and gives a performance that is thrilling throughout, ending in a brilliant climax that leaves one breathless. The orchestral part is scored for full orchestra with liberal use of the brass and woodwind sections.

In *The Gramophone* (London) we find that the distinguished writer and critic, Compton Mackenzie, has this to say: "When Arthur Bliss dedicated this *Concerto* to the people of the United States of America he probably believed that he was offering to them the finest work he had accomplished, and without doubt he was right in his belief. This is great music. No concerto of comparable stature has been written by a British composer since Elgar's *Violin Concerto*, and if I qualify that dogmatic assertion by adding 'in my opinion,' it is only because I want to back up my opinion to the limit, and enjoy the credit of recognizing immediately a composition of genuine grandeur."

Many record enthusiasts have remarked of the superb reproduction achieved in the English recording of Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*, and we are glad to report that the present recording, which was very likely made about the same time, is equally as fine. Certainly no one could give its reproduction greater praise.

R.

**Bach: Concerto in D minor for two violins and orchestra.** Adolf Busch and Frances Magnes (violins) with the Busch Chamber Players. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-253. \$2.50.

This is the first new recording of this lovely work in over ten years. Last year, Victor re-issued its recording by Menuhin and Enesco, but that version was recorded in Europe about 1932 or 1933. Why a composition as well-known and well-liked

as this one has escaped the recorders for so long a time is something that we cannot answer. However, we are glad to welcome the present version, and we are very happy that Columbia chose Adolf Busch and his fellow players for what must have been very pleasant work. In speaking of Mr. Busch and his fellow players, we did not wish to slight Frances Magnes who does such a grand job as one of the two soloists, but we wanted to stress that this is really a *concerto grosso*, and its charm lies largely in the ensemble playing. For a fine performance, a number of fine musicians are required. The Busch Chamber Players supply that need superbly.

We particularly recommend this recording to those persons who think that they cannot appreciate Bach—those persons who think that the immortal master is "dry as dust." There is certainly nothing "dry" about this piece. It abounds in lovely smooth flowing melodies and contrapuntal harmonies that are a joy to listen to.

## VOCAL



**Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras, No. 5.** (Sung in Portuguese). Bidú Sayão (soprano) with eight 'celli and bass conducted by Heitor Villa-Lobos. 1-12" disc (C-71670-D). \$1.

X  
B.  
This is as charming and unusual a record as we have come across in many a long day. The distinguished Brazilian composer wrote a group of eight *Bachianas Brasileiras* in the spirit of the immortal Bach, using native melodies as the basis and developing them according to his own ideas. The present selection is the fifth in this group, and is for soprano and solo 'cello with a fascinating accompaniment of eight 'celli and bass. The even-flowing soprano aria is one of the most gorgeous bits of music we have listened to for some time, and the 'cello solo part by Leonard Rose is worthy of special notice. Miss Sayão, who is a compatriot of the composer, is the ideal interpreter for this work. Her flexible, smooth, and always crystal clear soprano voice flows along as an integral part of the composition, and that is as it should be, for the voice is really a part of the work as a whole. It is not a soprano solo with string accompaniment. It is such a temptation for the soloist, in a piece like this, to extend her voice into the forefront and thus spoil the whole effect. Miss Sayão never yields to that temptation, we are very happy to report. A perfect balance is maintained by both of the soloists with the accompanying instruments and so we have a most artistic and thoroughly delightful musical experience in listening to this lovely work. This piece was new to us and we could not resist playing it again and again, and we rather feel that our discerning readers will have the same urge, once they have heard it.

R.

**Golden Moments of Song.** Jan Peerce (tenor) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. (Sung in Italian). 2-10" disc in folder. Victor Set SP-8. \$1.75.

V-10-1145 Capua: *O Sole Mio*.  
Rossini: *La Danza*.

V-10-1146 Curtis: *Torna a Surriento*.  
Leoncavallo: *Mattinata*.

In a colorful folder blazoned with the alluring title, *Golden Moments of Song*, RCA Victor this month offers four popular and expansive Italian songs sung by Jan Peerce to the accompaniment of an orchestra under Maximilian Pilzer.

In the inside cover of the folder we further notice the subtitle, *Sunny Italy*. Indeed, Mr. Peerce catches much of the sunshine of the land of song, wine and spaghetti.

Three of the selections are among the most popular from the vast treasure-house of Neapolitan song, and are sung by Mr. Peerce in a very fair attempt at the local dialect. These are Edoardo di Capua's *O Sole Mio!*, Ernesto de Curtis' *Torn'a Surriento* and Gioacchino Rossini's *La Danza*.

Following in the footsteps of Caruso and Gigli, Mr. Peerce sings these numbers with a wealth of round, pulsating tone, if with not all the contagious enjoyment sensed in the interpretations of his great predecessors. This is music which does not call for any subtlety of treatment, and this is just as well, for Mr. Peerce has never been noted as a singer of particular sensitivity or nuance.

The fourth selection is Ruggiero Leoncavallo's lovely *Mattinata*, one of the most melodious and characteristic of Italian *fin-de-siecle* songs, and again the singer's powers are admirably suited to the music.

As one who has heard such songs sung, long ago in childhood, on Italian streets and seashores, we wonder what these composers would think of the surging and greatly elaborated orchestrations supplied by Mr. Pilzer? We have a sneaking suspicion that they would probably delight in them.

The recording is unusually well-balanced; the surfaces, smooth.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Rose: Holiday for Strings.** One side, and **Rose: Our Waltz.** James Melton (tenor) with orchestra and chorus directed by Al Goodman. 1-10" disc (V-10-1172). 75c.

We feel that James Melton's gorgeous voice is wasted on these selections. In the first place both of them are primarily orchestral pieces, and in our opinion are much more attractive without any voice at all, and, secondly, if a voice is added, a female voice would be much more appropriate. If this record enjoys a wide sale, there must be a large new group of record buyers with whom we have not as yet become acquainted.

**Herbert: Italian Street Song** (from "Naughty Marietta"). One side, and **Herbert**—arr. Stothart: **Summer Serenade** (based on *Badiane* from "Sweethearts"). Jeanette MacDonald (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1134). 75c.

These Victor Herbert selections are just the type of pieces that Miss MacDonald can sing very well. They are mighty attractive in themselves and she gives very pleasing renditions on this disc. It is too bad that Victor did not add a chorus to supply a choral background for her soprano obbligato in the *Italian Street Song*.

## PIANO



**Russian Music for Two Pianos.** Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (pianos). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-576. \$3.50.

C-71671-D Rimsky-Korsakov (arr. Babin):  
*Dance of the Tumblers*.  
Rimsky-Korsakov (arr. Babin):  
*Cradle Song*.

C-71672-D Babin: *Russian Village*.  
Arensky: *Waltz* (from Suite No. 1  
for Two Pianos).

C-71673-D Stravinsky (arr. Babin): *Tango*.  
Stravinsky (arr. Babin): *Circus Polka*.

After having made numerous recordings for Victor, Vronsky and Babin appear this month under the Columbia banner. They have chosen six Russian pieces, all of them quite attractive, and all of them suitable for two pianos. Right here, we would like to make a point. Vronsky and Babin have never recorded anything that was not suitable; they have left it to others to attempt two-piano versions of such things as the Coronation Scene from *Boris Godounoff*.

If you are interested in recordings of music for two pianos, we can recommend the present album, or any other records that this fine team has made.

**Chopin: Polonaise No. 6 in A flat major, Op. 53.**  
Egon Petri (piano). 1-10" disc (C-17377-D). 75c.

Since Victor issued its recording of this popular piece, which is featured in the smash hit *A Song to Remember*, the dealers have not been able to begin to supply the demand. Thousands of persons have been disappointed in not being able to get a copy. Columbia now offers its version by the celebrated pianist Egon Petri and that should help, because most persons want a good recording of the "Polonaise" and it does not make a great deal of difference who plays it. The Columbia record is a good recording and ample stocks should be on hand at your dealer's shops when you read this.

## OPERA

**Wagner: Tristan und Isolde**—Excerpts. Helen Traubel (soprano) with Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-573. \$5.50.

Among our several reviewers, we feel that Max de Schauensee is by all odds the best qualified to comment on this important release. Mr. de Schauensee is at present on vacation and so we are simply listing the recording this month. Look for Mr. de Schauensee's review in our October issue.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Ballad for F D R.** (As broadcast by WNEW, Sunday, April 15, 1945). Written by Milton Robertson. Music by Tom Glazer. Tom Glazer (vocalist) with supporting cast consisting of Harriet Priestly, Paul Conrad and Shepherd Menken. 2-10" discs in album. Asch Set 200. \$2.50.

On the Sunday following the death of President Roosevelt this unique broadcast was made by station WNEW. It was greeted with unusual response by the radio audience and Asch felt that it was worthy of preservation; thus, this recording. It is a ballad in hillbilly style sung by Tom Glazer who supplies his own guitar accompaniment. Spoken dialogue by the cast listed in the heading is interspersed with the singing. The Ballad for F D R will appeal to those who are touched by maudlin sentimentality, or in the years to come, it may have some historic interest in showing how the man-in-the-street felt about the passing of Franklin Roosevelt.

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## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

**The Victor Book of Musical Fun.** By Ted Cott. 169 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$1.50.

**Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death.** By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

**The Musical Scene.** By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

**Evenings With Music.** By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

**Adventures in Symphonic Music.** By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

**What We Hear in Music.** (Twelfth Revised Edition.) By Anne Shaw Faulkner. 704 pp. Illustrated RCA Victor Division (Camden, N. J.). Price \$2.25.

**The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.** George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

**The History of Music in Performance.** Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

**NOTE:** All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

*Issued Monthly by*

**H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY**

*"The World's Record Shop"*

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U.S.A.

VOL. 13. NO. 8

OCTOBER 1945

By mail to any address  
50c. per year

THE big news last month was the announcement of Victor's Red Seal De Luxe Record! The big news this month is that it will work on nearly every automatic changer on the market; the only exceptions are those few changers on which the weight of the record controls the automatic mechanism. This is good news and takes a big load from the minds of the dealers. For some unknown reason the samples of the new De Luxe record which were sent last month to dealers all over the country were made very much thinner than the standard records and dealers immediately saw that they would not work on many changers and were thus very much upset. However, they really had nothing to worry about for when the stock records came from the factory they were found to be practically the same thickness as the standard discs.

The first set of Red Seal De Luxe records is now in the hands of the public and our readers may see for themselves whether the new records will operate satisfactorily on their own automatic phonographs. The first set is, of course, Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche* by the Boston Symphony Orchestra (Victor Set V-1) which was reviewed in last month's issue of THE NEW RECORDS.

\* \* \*

Columbia's new 1946 catalogue is now available. It contains all releases up to and including December 1945. It follows the same general style as the present catalogue but has grown to 499 pages. It is a grand catalogue—comprehensive, yet easy to use. The price is 25c (postpaid within U.S.A.).

\* \* \*

Collectors of fine records have known of the superb recordings issued by the Beethoven Piano Sonata Society (London), but they have not been able to obtain any of them for several years. A small shipment recently arrived from

England and the volumes that are presently available (all in automatic sequence) are listed at the end of this article.

For those who are not familiar with this Society, a few words about it might be of general interest. The Society was formed to make available uniform recordings of all the Beethoven Piano Sonatas. Artur Schnabel was selected to make the records. A limited number of each volume was pressed and issued from time to time until Volume XII appeared which completed the task; all of the sonatas had been recorded and released. Then Volumes XIII, XIV and XV were issued containing other interesting Beethoven works for pianoforte. Artur Schnabel was again the artist selected.

Volumes I and II are out-of-print and occasionally advertisements appear offering substantial bonuses for these items.

**Beethoven Piano Sonata Society, Vol. III:** Sonata in D major, Op. 28; Sonata in G minor, Op. 49, No. 1; Sonata in A flat major, Op. 110. *Artur Schnabel (piano)*. 7-12" discs in album. \$17.50.

**Beethoven Piano Sonata Society, Vol. V:** Sonata in B flat major, Op. 22; Sonata in G major, Op. 49, No. 2; Sonata in F minor, Op. 57. *Artur Schnabel (piano)*. 7-12" discs in album. \$17.50.

**Beethoven Piano Sonata Society, Vol. VI:** Sonata in E flat major, Op. 31, No. 3; Sonata in F major, Op. 10, No. 2; Sonata in C minor, Op. 13. *Artur Schnabel (piano)*. 7-12" discs in album. \$17.50.

**Beethoven Piano Sonata Society, Vol. VII:** Sonata in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1; Sonata in G major, Op. 14, No. 2; Sonata in A major, Op. 101. *Artur Schnabel (piano)*. 7-12" discs in album. \$17.50.

**Beethoven Piano Sonata Society, Vol. VIII:** Sonata in C major, Op. 2, No. 3; Sonata in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2; Sonata in F major, Op. 54. *Artur Schnabel (piano)*. 7-12" discs in album. \$17.50.

**Beethoven Piano Sonata Society, Vol. IX:** Sonata in A flat major, Op. 26; Sonata in C major, Op. 53. *Artur Schnabel (piano)*. 6-12" discs in album. \$15.

**BUY U. S. WAR BONDS AND STAMPS**

**Beethoven Piano Sonata Society, Vol. X:** Sonata in B flat major, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier"). Artur Schnabel (piano). 6-12" discs in album. \$15.

**Beethoven Piano Sonata Society, Vol. XI:** Sonata in E flat major, Op. 7; Sonata in G major, Op. 31, No. 1. Artur Schnabel (piano). 7-12" discs in album. \$17.50.

**Beethoven Piano Sonata Society, Vol. XII:** Sonata in C minor, Op. 10, No. 1; Sonata in D major, Op. 10, No. 3; Sonata in G major, Op. 79. Artur Schnabel (piano). 6-12" discs in album. \$15.

**Beethoven Piano Sonata Society, Vol. XIV:** Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 129; Rondo in A major; Six Variations in F on an Original Theme, Op. 34; Six Bagatelles, Op. 126; Fantasia, Op. 77. Artur Schnabel (piano). 7-12" discs in album. \$17.50.

\* \* \*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

## ORCHESTRA



**Thomson: Five Portraits.** The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Virgil Thomson. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-255. \$2.50.

In order that we may all have a better understanding of Virgil Thomson's unusual work, which was given its first performance on November 17, 1944, by the Philadelphia Orchestra with the composer conducting, it might be well to quote at some length from the program notes that Mr. Thomson supplied for that concert. At that time the work was programmed as *Suite for Orchestra* instead of its present title *Five Portraits*, however, the five parts bore the same captions that appear on the present record labels: *Bugles and Birds*; *Cantabile for Strings*; *Tango Lullaby*; *Fugue*; and *Percussion Piece*. And now let us turn to Mr. Thomson's notes:

"The description of character through music is an ancient preoccupation of composers. Among those who have practiced it assiduously are Ferqueray the elder and the great Francois Couperin. Robert Schumann included personal sketches in his *Carnaval*. Anton Rubinstein made a set of twelve likenesses under the title *Kammenoi Ostrow*. . . . Sir Edward Elgar's *Enigma Variations* are likewise portraits of friends.

"Virgil Thomson first started making musical portraits in 1928. The gallery of them now includes over a hundred. . . . Excepting for eight, which are portraits of close friends, they are all drawn from life. The subject sits for his likeness, as he would for a painter; and the music is composed in front of him, usually at one sitting. Orchestral scoring is worked out in detail later.

"The musical style of the pieces varies with the personality of the subject. Sometimes it is harmonious, sometimes dissonant, sometimes straightforwardly tuneful, sometimes thematically or contrapuntally developed. An effort has been made to catch in all cases a likeness recognizable to persons acquainted with the sitter. The interest of these pieces for the musical public at large, however, must depend, of course, on whatever intrinsic merit they may be found to possess.

"*Bugles and Birds*, a portrait of the painter Pablo Picasso, is a representation of the man, not of his work, save in so far as certain traits of character are marked in both. . . . The *Cantabile for Strings* describes a young painter of Russian birth, Nicolas de Chatelain. . . . The *Tango Lullaby* depicts as a young girl Mademoiselle Flavie Alvarez de Toledo (now Madame Jean-Pierre Cazelles). . . . The *Fugue* is a representation of the American conductor Alexander Smallens. It was composed at the conductor's home, Wallack's Point, Connecticut, September 6, 1940. . . . The *Percussion Piece* depicts Mrs. Chester Whitin Lasell of Whitinsville, Massachusetts, a California lady, long resident in New England. It was composed in Maine on September 7, 1941."

We hope that these notes have whetted your appetite sufficiently to cause you to want to hear Mr. Thomson's suite, because only by listening to it will you be able to tell whether you will find it pleasing and interesting to you. Mr. Thomson is an unusual person as those persons who read his recent book *The Musical Scene* well know, and the present work is an unusual bit, or rather a series of unusual bits of music. You will be either for it or "agin" it—there is no halfway business about Mr. Thomson's music.

R.

**Bizet: Carmen—Excerpts.** New York City Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1002. \$4.50.

Leopold Stokowski's second recorded offering in conjunction with the New York City Symphony Orchestra is an album entitled *Music from Carmen*.

It is well recorded and well conducted, but there is too much material. Stokowski would have done better to content himself with less. The *Micaela Aria*, Carmen's *Habanera* and *L'es Triangles des Sistres tintaitent*, and certain choral portions do not fare well transcribed for orchestra, and in the case of the *Micaela Aria* (arbitrarily called *Nocturne* here by Stokowski), we already have the lovely pastoral entr'acte which precedes Act 3, to offer contrast to the more fiery pages of the score.

We are also puzzled by the helter-skelter arrangement of these numbers. Stokowski gives the impression of having written them down on slips of paper, shaken them well in a hat, and then pulled them out at random.

It is a pity that we cannot have a really good

complete vocal version of one of the greatest and most popular of operas. The two existing versions are not in any way representative of this unique masterpiece. Both sets are plagued by old-fashioned and creaky recording. The Columbia version is badly cut and not too well sung, while the Victor set is sung in Italian, which is hardly the definitive *Carmen*. There would be a splendid chance to make a really good and complete recording of the opera. However, if this idea should prove too prostrating, a *recordrama* or abridged version with first rate artists, with an orchestra and chorus assembled and directed with conscience, should prove a most popular and lucrative recording venture for some company. Will somebody take the hint? D.

**Rimsky-Korsakov: Le coq d'or—Suite.** Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-254. \$2.50.

In the particularly fine recording of the music from Rimsky-Korsakov's last opera we have a very worthy addition to the repertory of recorded music. The present orchestral suite was made by two of Rimsky-Korsakov's friends and colleagues "in accordance with the composer's intentions." They were Alexander Glazounov and Maximilian Steinberg. The suite is in four movements as follows: 1) *Introduction; King Dodon in His Palace*. 2) *King Dodon on the Battlefield*. 3) *King Dodon and the Queen of Shemakha*. 4) *Bridal Procession and Lamentable Death of King Dodon*. In this recording the second movement is omitted as it very often is in concert performances of this work.

This is the first recording that we have heard of the Minneapolis Symphony in a long time and we can certainly state that this organization hasn't deteriorated under the leadership of Mr. Mitropoulos—in fact it never showed to better advantage than it does on this pair of discs. The *Coq d'or* music, spirited and intense, with the tang of the orient, suits Mitropoulos perfectly, and he makes the most of his opportunity. The Columbia recorders have done a grand job. Taking all things into consideration—the novelty of the music, the fine performance of the orchestra, and the reproduction—we have an album that we can recommend without reservation. R.

**Gershwin—arr. Bennett: Porgy and Bess—A Symphonic Picture.** The Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-397. \$2.50.

This is the third recorded version of Russell Bennett's attractive orchestral arrangement of the Gershwin's tunes from his famous *Porgy and Bess*, and by far the least distinguished. Much of the transitional music that carries one important tune to another has been cut in order to get the work on four record sides, and this makes the piece an ordinary medley rather than "A Symphonic Picture." The breaks at the end of the record sides are not well placed—the

ending of side one leaves the listener hanging in thin air. We rather feel that most music lovers will be perfectly willing to spend the extra dollar for either the Columbia set by the Pittsburgh Symphony under Reiner, or the Victor set by the Indianapolis Symphony under Sevitzky.

**Addinsell: Warsaw Concerto** (from the picture "Suicide Squadron"). Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. Leo Litwin (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-8863). \$1.

Another recording of *Warsaw Concerto* — that unique piece that still remains popular in the semi-classic repertory—this time by the Boston "Pops" with Leo Litwin doing the piano part. This version is probably the best of the available recordings of it. In any case, if you have the urge to add the *Warsaw Concerto* to your collection, do not neglect to consider the present disc.

**Rodgers: If I Loved You** (from "Carousel"). One side, and **Carroll: I'm Always Chasing Rainbows**. Al Goodman and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc. (V-28-0402). 75c.

From time to time there is a demand for popular show tunes on 12-inch records without vocals. In answer to this demand, Victor has had Al Goodman and his Orchestra record a concert version of *If I Loved You* from the New York smash hit "Carousel." This is backed up with the "alltime oldtimer" *I'm Always Chasing Rainbows*. Pleasing popular music played with taste!

**Moeran: Symphony in G minor.** The Hallé Orchestra conducted by Leslie Heward. Eleven sides, and **Rawsthorne: Four Bagatelles for Piano** (1938). Dennis Matthews (piano). 6-12" discs (V-C-3319/24) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (V-C-7566/71). \$11.40.

This imported set of discs was reviewed in the October 1944 issue of THE NEW RECORDS. The few copies that were received in the first shipment from England were sold immediately. Another shipment, containing some sets in automatic sequence only, has just arrived and so we are re-listing this important item this month.

## CONCERTO



**Mendelssohn: Concerto in E minor, Op. 64.** Nathan Milstein (violin) with Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. Seven sides, and **Mendelssohn: Midsummer Night's Dream — Scherzo.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-577. \$4.50.

The *E Minor Violin Concerto*, together with the *Scotch* and *Italian* Symphonies and the incidental music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, constitutes Mendelssohn's surest claim to greatness. The music

of this composer seemed to reach the peak of its popularity during the eighties and nineties. During the first three decades of the present century a certain snobbish aloofness manifested itself against his works, as people sought and demanded music that they considered greater and more profound. But, during the last 15 years, Mendelssohn's popularity has subtly and imperceptibly been on the increase once more. Music is no exception to the whims of fashion.

Not only is the *E Minor Concerto* one of its composer's outstanding creations, but it is as well one of the best compositions in this particular form and stands well to the fore in a select circle. This is peculiarly true when there is a violinist present with great technical resources.

Such an artist is Nathan Milstein, who follows up his fine recordings of the Tchaikovsky, Bruch and Lalo concertos with this delightful album. Bruno Walter and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York are at Mr. Milstein's side, and it is an admirable union in every way.

Though there are recordings of this concerto by Szigeti, Menuhin and Kreisler, it seems to us that Milstein, with his silvery tone and mercurial technique is just the violinist for the *E Minor*, and, of course, he enjoys far better reproduction than the other gentlemen.

On the eighth side, Mr. Walter gives us a finely etched playing of the *Scherzo* from *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Technically, this album is a superior job.



## OPERA

**Wagner: Tristan und Isolde**—Excerpts. Helen Traubel (soprano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinsky. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-573. \$5.50.

With a handsome new album entitled "Excerpts from *Tristan und Isolde*," it is obvious that Columbia wishes to feature Helen Traubel in her debut with them, for her name appears in huge letters on the volume's cover.

Mme. Traubel sings Isolde's first act, *Narrative*, and the *Liebestod*, accompanied by the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York under Artur Rodzinsky. Mr. Rodzinsky also appears in the *Vorspiel* and the *Prelude to Act III*.

It seems to us that the engineers at Columbia have gauged the volume of Mme. Traubel's heroic voice far better than the gentlemen at RCA Victor. Certainly this voice needs no amplification, and with this realization well in mind, Columbia has reproduced the soprano's tones with compelling realism.

The singer begins Isolde's turbulent narrative at the words *Erfuhrest du meine Schmach* and proceeds

for 269 bars without a cut to the final curse *Fluch dir Verruchter!* Brangaene's brief comments are filled in by the orchestra. This is one of the most thrilling and important passages in Wagner's music-drama, and it goes without saying that Mme. Traubel sings it with great power and intensity, with an alternating tenderness and irony, as she relates the story of her first encounter with the wounded Tristan. The soprano sweeps onward with a wealth of desired nuance, with a tone that is silver-bright rather than velvety. The Curse is catapulted forth in thrilling fashion.

Mme. Traubel is also very much in the proper voice and mood during the *Liebestod*, though she scarcely effaces memories of Kirsten Flagstad, who for us, in these closing moments, has never been surpassed either in performance or on records. Nevertheless, one is conscious while listening to Mme. Traubel, of being in the presence of a woman with a great voice and an absolutely first-class method of using it.

As for Mr. Rodzinsky and his forces, we thought that his opening *Vorspiel*, though weighty and dignified and deeply felt, was lacking in exaltation and tension, and we were sorely disappointed in the climax. He fares far better in the wonderful third act prelude, and it is a matter of rejoicing that every one of the 41 bars given to the piping of the shepherd (scored by Wagner for *cor anglais*) are superbly reproduced and played in masterly fashion by Michel Nazzi.

The recording of the orchestra is not as satisfactory as the reproduction of the voice. In the *Vorspiel* some of the instruments sound blatty and out of focus and there is a rather muddy quality in this orchestral flood. The third act prelude is a far better technical job.

Despite any flaws we have mentioned, we can highly recommend this thrilling album, and we rejoice to hear Mme. Traubel's distinguished singing so honestly reproduced.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Thomas: Mignon**—Polonaise: Je suis Titania. Act II. One side, and Rimsky-Korsakoff: Le Coq d'Or—Salut à toi, soleil (Hymn to the Sun). Act II. Patrice Munsel (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Sylvan Levin. 1-12" disc (V-11-8886). \$1.

Patrice Munsel, youthful coloratura soprano of the Metropolitan, makes her debut on records this month. With Lily Pons assiduously recording at Columbia, Miss Munsel will undoubtedly be Victor's chief coloratura star of the immediate future. For her debut the brilliant Polonaise from *Mignon* and the Hymn to the Sun from *Le Coq d'Or* have been selected. Her singing stirs many controversial feelings.

Miss Munsel has an excellent idea of the *bravura* style, and she is able to make music such as this sound alive and interesting. There is tremendous spirit and enthusiasm in her singing, in fact, often a bit too much. As a result her tone quality suffers and when

stressed becomes driven and metallic.

Of the two arias, we found the *Coq d'Or* by far the more satisfactory. Miss Munsel emerges with a capital achievement in Rimsky's music, weaving delicate tendrils of tone against the exotic color of the orchestra. She elects to end the aria an octave higher than it is written, but we won't hold this too much against her.

The *Polonaise* is one of the most beloved of coloratura war-horses, and many celebrated exponents of florid singing — Tetrazzini, Barrientos, Galli-Curci, Garrison *et al*—have had a fling at it on records. Miss Munsel understands the spirit of the aria, but less edgy and pungent tones would have often been desirable. Her scales are rapid and punched out with remarkable accuracy, but her trills leave much to be desired. In fact, it is often difficult to distinguish her trills from the over-vibrant climax notes. The singer's French is very commendable, and we will watch with interest for further recordings.

Technically, the records are on the loud and brilliant side, but they are also clear and well-balanced. Sylvan Levin does a nice job with the orchestral accompaniment.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**French Operatic Arias.** Martial Singher (baritone) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Paul Breisach. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-578. \$4.50.

C-71678-D Lully: *Amadis*—Bois épais, redouble ton ombre.

Gretry: *Richard, coeur de lion*—Blondel's Air.

C-71679-D Berlioz: *Damnation of Faust*—Mephistopheles' Air and Serenade. (Act II), and Song of the Flea. (Act II.) Gounod: *Romeo et Juliette*—Ballad of Queen Mab. (Act I).

C-71680-D Thomas: *Hamlet*—Chanson bachique. (Act II).

Massenet: *Herodiade* — Vision Fugitive. (Act II).

C-71681-D Offenbach: *Tales of Hoffman*—Daper-tutto's Air. (Act III).

Bizet: *Carmen*—Toreador Song. (Act II).

This month Columbia presents the fine French baritone, Martial Singher, now one of the ornaments of the Metropolitan, in an album of arias from the French operatic repertoire.

Mr. Singher sings extremely well and is in every way a finished and serious artist—musical, rhythmic, a respecter of the composer's intentions. In this, his American recording debut, he has rendered an important service, for 6 of the 10 arias presented are not to be found in today's American catalogues.

This singer has a voice of dark, solid timbre with an unusually fine and solid lower register. It is not

a thrilling voice in the sense that the voices of Ruffo, Amato and Renaud were, but rather a fine one, with dignity, breadth and knowledge in its usage as its chief characteristics. Nor can we say that Mr. Singher has the play of imagination, the fanciful inspiration of a Plançon, a Renaud or a de Gogorza for such miniature ironic masterpieces as the *Damnation de Faust* selections. Personally, we like best the baritone's handling of the arias from *Contes d'Hoffman*, *Romeo* and *Richard cœur de lion*. *Bois épais* we found singularly dull. Mr. Singher, for all that he is obviously a master of style, misses the classic nobility and expansiveness of spirit in this music, and is merely plaintively intimate. In the *Toreador Song*, the low notes are capitally encompassed and the singer pays fastidious attention to the grace notes which give the aria both style and character.

On the whole, this is a notable album with many more virtues than drawbacks. The recording is unusually clear, steady and honest, and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, under Paul Breisach, comes through to its artistic credit.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Mozart: Nozze di Figaro**—Porgi amor (Cavatina). Act II. One side, and **Mozart: Nozze di Figaro** —Dove sono. Act III. Sung in Italian. Eleanor Steber (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (V-11-8850). \$1.

We are glad to welcome this first operatic record by the young Metropolitan artist, Eleanor Steber. Miss Steber has chosen two arias from Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro*, an opera in which she has appeared with considerable success on several occasions. In our opinion both arias are beautifully sung with a high degree of artistry, and we should think that Miss Steber would be glad to be judged by the examples of her ability to be found on this disc. Erich Leinsdorf, also of the Metropolitan, renders excellent orchestral support with the well-balanced Victor Orchestra.

Here is a grand disc for those persons who enjoy Mozart operatic selections well and artistically recorded.

**Wagner: Tannhäuser**—Wohl wusst' ich hier sie im Gebet zu finden. Act III. Herbert Janssen (baritone) with Orchestra of the Colon Opera House, Buenos Aires, conducted by Roberto Kinsky. One side, and **Wagner: Tannhäuser** — Recit: Wie Todesahnung. Air: O du mein holder Abendstern. Act III. Herbert Janssen (baritone) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Paul Breisach. 1-12" disc (C-71697-D). \$1.

Of particular interest, because there is no other recording available in the domestic catalogues, is Mr. Janssen's fine rendition of Wolfram's Entry Wohl wusst' ich hier which occurs in the first scene of Act III just before the Pilgrims' Chorus. Some collectors may recall the splendid recording of this made by Gerhard Hüsch for HMV many years ago. Mr.

Janssen's is to be preferred, if only for the advantages of the modern recording technique. His singing of the well-known *Song to the Evening Star*, which occupies the reverse side of the present disc, rates very well with the five or six other versions that are available domestically on records.

## VOCAL



**Marjorie Lawrence Sings for the Boys.** Marjorie Lawrence (soprano) with male quartet and orchestra conducted by Sylvan Shulman. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-579. \$3.50.

C-71682-D Waltzing Matilda.  
Annie Laurie.

C-71683-D Malotte: The Lord's Prayer.  
Danny Boy.

C-71684-D The Chocolate Soldier—My Hero.  
1) Maori Farewell. 2) Auld Lang Syne.

Marjorie Lawrence's initial appearance with Columbia is more a matter of sentiment and souvenir than one of importance and worth. Miss Lawrence is offered in an album containing three double-faced 12-inch records entitled "Marjorie Lawrence Sings for the Boys."

The material is supposed to be representative of what the soprano gave our boys on her tour of the Pacific War Zone. At that time she was justly admired for her gallantry, and we well remember the success she had one evening in the Philadelphia Stage Door Canteen, when she sang several of the numbers here recorded. And so it is indeed fitting that this album be offered as testimony of the singer's unflagging courage.

Miss Lawrence's warm and distinctive soprano is reproduced to the life. Her singing of Malotte's *The Lord's Prayer* is the most deeply felt and sincere that we have heard. Personally we like her *Waltzing Matilda* and *Maori Farewell* better than anything else in the album. The *Annie Laurie* and *Danny Boy* seemed rather mannered, as though the singer were trying too hard to put over the sentiment. Aside from occasional scooping and peculiarities in tone effect, Miss Lawrence's singing is strong and fresh with a good vocal line.

We feel that you will like this volume, and if you have been engaged in any morale work during this past war, it will serve as a reminder of your own endeavor, as well as a tribute to a splendid woman and artist. D.

**Tchaikovsky: None but the Lonely Heart.** One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Moscow Cantata — Prayer.** Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Sylvan Levin. 1-10" disc (V-10-1166). 75c.

It is quite a step from *Beat Out Dat Rhythm on a Drum* (one of Miss Swarthout's recent recordings) to

the selections on her present record. Surely a step in the right direction! Of particular interest is her fine rendition of the *Prayer* from Tchaikovsky's cantata, which he was commissioned to write for the coronation of Alexander III in 1883.

There is a rather interesting story connected with this work. In the spring of 1883, Tchaikovsky was in Paris, and as usual was low in funds, when he received an official commission to set Maikov's text entitled *Moscow* to music in cantata form for the coronation to be held early in June. The promise of a substantial reward probably caused Peter Illich to proceed with the work without delay. The score was completed and dispatched to Moscow in early April. One can imagine, therefore, the composer's concern when he received a telegram shortly before the coronation inquiring about the score. Evidently it had been lost, and there was not time to recompose it even if Tchaikovsky were so inclined, which he was not, because he had just finished his opera, *Mazepa*, on which he had worked night and day for many weeks. However, the next day another telegram arrived saying that the missing score had been found. *Moscow* was given at the Granovitaya Palace under Napravnik's direction and met with royal approval. A gift of 1500 rubles was granted to the composer and so everything turned out all right in the end.

Miss Swarthout's recording of the ever-popular *None but the Lonely Heart* is a very acceptable coupling.

**Lily Pons Program.** Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Pietro Cimara and Maurice Abravanel. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-582. \$2.75.

C-17370-D Verdi: Rigoletto—Caro nome.

C-17371-D Proch: Theme and Variations.

C-17372-D David: La perle du Bresil—Charmant oiseau.

We wish we could enthuse over Lily Pons' latest album of arias, but we assuredly cannot. The sounds that come from these Columbia surfaces are not agreeable; they are wiry and decidedly acute.

Furthermore, we have never subscribed to the practice of splitting arias in half on ten-inch sides, which can be placed entirely on a twelve-inch side. We remarked this at the time that Columbia issued Mme. Pons' album M-505. There is something extremely irritating in having to get up and turn over a record in the middle of *Caro Nome*, which is what one has to do with the first of the three arias in this album. Such a procedure makes enjoyment virtually impossible, especially when record collectors have been able to play this aria through without interruption from the beginning of recorded history.

Mme. Pons, beside *Caro nome*, has also made for her present venture *Charmant oiseau* from Felicien David's *Perle du Bresil* and the celebrated *Proch Variations*. There was a decided need for a fine elec-

trical record of David's charming and graceful air, and so it was all the more disappointing that the present example is not more pleasant to listen to. One might just as well be contented with the fine acoustical records of this aria by Galli-Curci, Tetrazzini and Calvé—they are able to give far more pleasure.

The Proch Variations display Mme. Pons' rapid staccati and vocal elegance, and despite Miliza Korjus' remarkable record, were a logical choice for the French diva to record. Unfortunately, whatever spontaneity Mme. Pons' coloratura possessed seems to have disappeared and her roulades and staccati are so studied that one knows just what is coming next.

As for *Caro nome*, it is indeed difficult to understand why Mme. Pons has wished to risk comparison with her infinitely superior Victor version (V-7383), made during her first season in America. We played one version after another and were appalled at the loss of velvety tone, vocal charm and flexibility that the singer has suffered in the interim. Mme. Pons sang in revivals of both *Sonnambula* and *Linda di Chamounix* at the Metropolitan, and it would have been far more interesting and significant had she seen fit to record some of the beautiful arias from these operas rather than this poorly sung, badly recorded and impossibly divided old war-horse.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Kern:** *The Jockey on the Carousel* (from "I Dream Too Much"). One side, and **Friml:** *L'amour, toujours l'amour*. Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Maurice Abravanel. 1-12" disc (C-71698-D). \$1.

Miss Pons offers the very pleasing *The Jockey on the Carousel* which Jerome Kern wrote especially for her to sing in the picture "I Dream Too Much." In this selection she is ably supported by a good male chorus which adds much to the attractiveness of this number. Friml's sure-fire hit, *L'amour, toujours l'amour* nicely fills the other side of this disc.

### CHAMBER MUSIC



**Beethoven:** *Sonata in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2*. Seven sides, and **Beethoven:** *Rondo in G*. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) and Hephzibah Menuhin (piano). 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1008. \$4.50.

This famous brother and sister team gives a very satisfactory performance of the second in a series of three sonatas for violin and pianoforte which Beethoven dedicated to the Russian Emperor Alexander I. We have the older recording by Adolph Busch and Rudolf Serkin (Victor Set M-283) in our collection. Although it was recorded over ten years ago it still sounds very good to us. However, we suppose that most persons will prefer the more modern recording.

### VIOLONCELLO



**Cello Melodies.** Raya Garbousova (violoncello) with piano accompaniment by Erich-Itor Kahn. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1017. \$3.50.

Raya Garbousova was born in Tiflis, Russia, circa 1906. After graduating from the Conservatory of her native city in 1923, she studied with the noted 'cellists Felix Salmond and Pablo Casals. In 1934 she appeared as soloist with the Casals Orchestra in Barcelona and thereafter toured throughout Europe. In 1936 she came to America and since that time has given numerous concerts and has appeared with many of the important symphony orchestras throughout the country. She is considered by critics generally as the greatest living woman 'cellist.

Miss Garbousova has chosen for her first Victor album a group of well-known melodies which have been arranged for, and are often associated with, the 'cello. Pieces that cannot fail to attract the average music lover—the fellow who says: "I like music with some melody in it." Miss Garbousova is capable of doing much better things, and unquestionably she will give us some recordings for the more discerning a little later on. Her present selections will appeal to a wide audience, and she will very likely make a host of friends, who would not be attracted by works of a deeper nature. She plays them all beautifully and her gorgeous singing tone is much in evidence. For pure musical enjoyment we can recommend this album most highly.

It would not be fair in considering these recordings not to say a word or two in praise of the superb accompaniments supplied by Erich-Itor Kahn, whose name, by the way, is misspelled on the labels of the records.

Arrangements for the 'cello of the following selections are included in this attractive album: Saint-Saëns' *The Swan*; Chopin's Waltz in A minor; Prize Song from *Die Meistersinger*; *The Evening Star* from *Tannhäuser*; Bach's *Largo* from *Concerto in A*; and Aubeniz's *Malaguena*. Not many strangers in that group, are there?

**Beethoven**—arr. Stutschewsky and Thaler: *Sonatine*. One side, and **Glazounoff:** *Chant du ménestrel*. Edmund Kurtz (violoncello) and Emanuel Bay (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-8815). \$1.

Edmund Kurtz might have chosen Saint-Saëns' *The Swan* or some other popular trifle for his Victor record debut, but he didn't, for which we are very thankful. Instead he chose two selections which one may put his teeth in—selections he has made very much his own by playing them so many times in concert. Those who have heard Mr. Kurtz in recital, very likely have heard these pieces. He gives them each a splendid performance and is ably assisted by

the celebrated accompanist Emanuel Bay. For those who would like to have a recording by the Russian-born 'cellist Edmund Kurtz, who was a well-established and mature artist long before he came to this country, the present disc is highly recommended.

## PIANO



**Rachmaninoff:** *Prelude in C sharp minor*, Op. 3, No. 2. One side, and **Shostakovich:** *Three Preludes from Opus 34*. William Kapell (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-8824). \$1.

The brilliant young pianist William Kapell has chosen for his first Victor recording the famous Rachmaninoff *Prelude in C sharp minor*. It seems that every pianist, at one time or another, has to make a recording of this selection, and so we suppose that it is just as well that Mr. Kapell gets it out of his system early in his career with Victor. There is no question but that he has recorded a great performance of this piece, and for those persons who would like to hear it again—we do not have that urge—the present disc should fill the bill adequately. We were very much more interested in the three short Shostakovich pieces found on the reverse side of this record. They are refreshing little numbers, and Kapell plays them in style very near perfection.

**Debussy:** *Clair de Lune* (No. 3 from Suite Bergamasque). One side, and **Liszt:** *Liebestraum No. 3*. José Iturbi (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-8851). \$1.

Probably everyone, who bought or tried to buy Iturbi's recording of Chopin's famous "Polonaise" which was featured in the film *A Song to Remember*, will not want a copy of this record, but very likely quite a number will, enough to make this a disc that will be rather difficult to find on the dealers' shelves. When an artist has such an outstanding hit as Iturbi had with his "Polonaise," his next record usually catches some of the momentum from the first record and moves right along. In the present case, there has been a persistent demand for Debussy's *Clair de Lune*—must have been featured in some movie or been played over the air several times or something. In any case, the demand is sufficient to aid this record in its climb toward top place on the best sellers list. Also the always popular *Liebestraum* (Dream of Love) won't be a drag on its sales. As the dealers say: "This record looks like a natural."



## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

**The Victor Book of Musical Fun.** By Ted Cott. 169 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$1.50.

**Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death.** By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

**The Musical Scene.** By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

**Evenings With Music.** By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

**Adventures in Symphonic Music.** By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

**What We Hear in Music. (Twelfth Revised Edition.)** By Anne Shaw Faulkner. 704 pp. Illustrated RCA Victor Division (Camden, N. J.). Price \$2.25.

**The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.** George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

**The History of Music in Performance.** Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

**NOTE:** All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Aege, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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50c. per year

*Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann.* By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv, 574 pp. Illustrated. Henry Holt & Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.

For those music lovers who are building a library of biographies of great composers, Mr. Schauffler's *Florestan* is heartily recommended. It might well take its place beside Herbert Weinstock's *Tchaikovsky*, Léon Vallas' *Claude Debussy* and John N. Burk's *The Life and Works of Beethoven*.

Most persons feel that they can enjoy and appreciate a composer's music much better if they know something of his life. After several years of research, which was subsidized by a committee of prominent music lovers, Mr. Schauffler produced this very comprehensive volume. Certainly, after reading it, one feels that Schumann and his brilliant wife are intimate friends.

*Florestan* is divided into two major parts. The first part contains an intimate account of Schumann's life from the cradle to the grave, and is authenticated on nearly every page by quotations from relevant correspondence. The second part contains a complete list of Schumann's music, a large portion of which is considered work by work in a detailed and critical manner. A list of the recorded works of Schumann, and very carefully prepared indexes, complete this important volume. A score of appropriate illustrations add to its interest.

Robert Haven Schauffler was originally a professional musician before he decided to devote his entire time to writing. He is considered an authority on Beethoven and Brahms, and his *Beethoven: The Man Who Freed*

Music and *The Unknown Brahms* both enjoyed large sales for books in their class. Perhaps after his present book, which takes its name from a character in the composer's writings which exemplified the optimistic side of his nature, Mr. Schauffler will be considered an authority on Schumann.

*Men and Women Who Make Music.* By David Ewen. xii + 244 pp. Illustrated. The Readers Press (New York). Price \$2.75.

Mr. Ewen's *Men and Women Who Make Music* is a collection of vignettes of musicians that are presently appearing on the concert platform. He has probably gathered these bits of interesting gossip and anecdotes about the great musical personalities of our day during his research for his more important books on music. They make pleasant reading but little else. Twenty-six artists are included in the group among whom will be found: Heifetz, Kreisler, Horowitz, Rubinstein, Flagstad, Anderson, Toscanini, Stokowski, Koussevitzky and Ormandy—just to mention a few. A full-page photograph of each artist considered is an attractive feature of this book.

Music lovers who grasp eagerly for every scrap of information about their favorite singer, instrumentalist, or conductor, will find some choice morsels in Mr. Ewen's little volume.

\* \* \*

The question as to which is the best available phonograph needle is one that it would take a wiser man than Solomon to answer. Readers all over the country are continually writing and asking us to recommend a needle

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for their use. We usually try to side-step such inquiries. However, several months ago, the Recoton Corporation placed on the market a new sapphire needle, known as the Recoton SUPRA Sapphire Needle, and samples of it were sent to us. We tested this new needle and found it highly satisfactory. In fact, we believed it to be the best needle that we had ever used. We refrained from mentioning it in *THE NEW RECORDS* until the public had had a chance to try it. A number of our readers have now used it and the reports that we have had all seem to confirm our belief that this needle is certainly an excellent one, if not the best reproducing point available.

The superb reproduction and lack of needle noise seem to be due to the high quality of the sapphires selected for this needle, and the fact that they are polished to an accuracy of 0.0001 of an inch. They are designed to fit the record grooves and follow the modulation line evenly. If you wish to hear recorded music that is just "out of this world," play one of the new Victor Red Seal De Luxe records with a Recoton SUPRA Sapphire Needle. The price of this needle is \$4 (post-paid within U.S.A.).

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in *THE NEW RECORDS* are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

## ORCHESTRA



**Schubert: Symphony No. 6 in C.** Seven sides, and  
**Mozart: Eine kleine Nachtmusik—Rondo.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1014. \$4.50.

For the classicists this will probably be the most important recording released in many years. A little known symphony of Schubert that has never been recorded before, and now presented under the direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. Could our fellow classicists ask for more? Certainly there is not a conductor available today who is better qualified for the task than Sir Thomas. We don't believe that much coaxing was required to have him make this recording. He probably took the podium with a twinkle in his eye, and with the finesse and excellent taste for which he is famous,

proceeded to give a performance that rises above any criticism that we are able to offer.

Schubert's *Symphony No. 6 in C* dates from 1818 and is the first to bear the caption "Grosse Sinfonie." We know no reason for this marking because it is similar in style and form to the earlier ones. The influence of Papa Haydn is quite evident, and in the *Scherzo* the style of Beethoven is clearly discernible. However, it is Schubertian throughout and anyone familiar with the music of that great master of melody would not mistake it for the work of any other composer. It was written for a group of Schubert's friends, most of them amateurs, who formed a small orchestra and delighted to play the works of their idol. There is no record of a public performance during the composer's lifetime. The first London performance was at Crystal Palace in 1868.

And now as to the reproduction—we have heard nothing finer! We are not alone in this opinion, for we find the distinguished author and world authority on phonograph records, Compton Mackenzie, writing in *The Gramophone* (London), says: "This Schubert Sixth Symphony gives the nearest illusion of an actual orchestra that I have yet heard, and for the first time my ear was not once offended by what I will call the gramophonic blur in which the individual instruments of the orchestra are lost in a sound that belongs only to the gramophone."

Victor is to be congratulated upon the promptness with which this recording was made available in this country. It was released in England during March of this year, and well before the year is out, anyone who is interested may secure a copy from his local dealer. Perhaps now that things are becoming more settled (or are they?), Victor will turn its attention to a number of important items that have been issued abroad during the last few years, and will make them generally available for music lovers in America. Of course, these items can be imported, but that is a long, tedious, and expensive procedure, and at present shipments are small and only arrive at long and irregular intervals.

R.

**Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125.** ("Choral"). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy with Stella Roman (soprano), Enid Szantho (contralto), Frederick Jagel (tenor), Nicola Moscona (bass) and Westminster Choir. 8-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-591. \$8.50.

Columbia has done a noble and spacious job in recording Beethoven's great 9th or "Choral" Symphony with such fidelity, such conscientiousness and obvious care. This is indeed a great service to the record world.

Of all the Beethoven symphonies this is the least well represented on discs, and it is therefore a pleasure to report that the present set is in every way worthy of its great subject.

Stokowski's version, sung in an English text and with a quartet of mediocre soloists is completely eclipsed by the present one, and it goes without saying that Weingartner's with the Vienna Philharmonic, though authoritative and an interesting souvenir of that great conductor, is nevertheless hopelessly outclassed due to its booming and now old-fashioned reproduction.

Eugene Ormandy tackles his task with an obvious sense of the seriousness and responsibility of such an undertaking. It is no easy matter to keep a good balance between so many elements and forces, but this has been beautifully managed and the set carries with it almost a sense of actual performance. The Philadelphia Orchestra has rarely sounded better and the Westminster Choir performs in expert fashion, the volume of this chorus being impressively reproduced.

A quartet consisting of Stella Roman, Enid Szantho, Frederick Jagel, and Nicola Moscona, shows to great advantage. The German or original text is rightly used. Mr. Moscona sounds rather tubby at his first solo entrance, but the quartet soon strikes its stride with some brilliant singing. Indeed the purity of Mme. Roman's high tones causes us to hope that Columbia will release some solos by her.

And so, we feel indebted and beholden to Columbia for a superlatively fine accomplishment. D.

**South of the Border.** Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-593. \$3.50.

Morton Gould's arrangements are always interesting and when played under his direction they fairly sparkle. For the present album, Mr. Gould has chosen a number of well-known selections from "South of the Border" and added his own composition, *Tropical*, for good measure. If South American music appeals to you, we are sure that you will find Mr. Gould's arrangements quite fascinating. In addition to *Tropical*, the following pieces will be found in this attractive collection: *Brazil*; *Cielito Lindo*; *La Golondrina*; *La Cumparsita*; *Jarabo Tapatío* (Mexican Hat Dance); *Adios Muchachos*; *El Relicario*; and *El Rancho Grande*.

## CONCERTO



**Schumann: Concerto in A minor, Op. 54.** Claudio Arrau (piano) with Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Karl Krueger. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1009. \$4.50.

A modern recording of this lovely Schumann concerto was badly needed. We are glad to report

that we believe most music lovers will be highly satisfied with this new version by Claudio Arrau with the Detroit Symphony conducted by Karl Krueger.

In 1845, Schumann picked up a piano piece that he had written several years before called *Fantasie*, which the various publishers had turned down, and after revising it and adding a slow movement and a finale, produced the now famous *Concerto in A minor*. In developing the composition that he did, Schumann took a new step in works of this character. At the time, most concertos were written with a brilliant player in mind and were made to display the virtuosity of the performer. Very often this was done at the expense of the work as a whole. Schumann had no such idea. He wrote a beautiful and romantic work for piano and orchestra, which might almost be called a symphony with the piano featured as an added solo instrument. It was given its first performance with the composer's wife, Clara Wieck, as the soloist on January 1, 1846. It was not received with much enthusiasm. The audience missed the pyrotechnics and great display of technical skill that it had been used to in such pieces and failed to appreciate the beauty of the work as a whole. It was not until many years after Schumann's death that it took its rightful place among the best-loved concertos of all times.

The fine reproduction that the Victor recorders have achieved, added to the excellent performance by Arrau and the Detroit Symphony, make this a set of discs that may be very highly recommended.

R.

## CHAMBER MUSIC



**Beethoven: Trio No. 7 in B flat major, Op. 97.** (Archduke). Solomon (piano), Henry Holst (violin) and Anthony Pini (violoncello). 5-12" discs in album (V-C-7588 to V-C-7592). Automatic sequence. \$9.50.

This set of discs from England has some pretty stiff competition here in the superb recording of the *Archduke Trio* by Messrs. Rubinstein, Heifetz and Feuermann (Victor Set M-949). However, the great English pianist Solomon plays the piano part in the imported recording and that fact may be enough to sway some music lovers in this country to favor it rather than the domestic version. We doubt if their number will be large but then we don't suppose that the dealers who specialize in imported recordings have brought very many copies of the English set over to this country. It seems very likely that everybody will be happy; the few music lovers who will wish the set with Solomon in it will be happy to get it, and the dealers won't have enough sets left on their hands to worry about.

## OPERA



**Wagner: Die Walküre—Act III (complete).** Helen Traubel (soprano) and Herbert Janssen (baritone) with vocal ensemble of the Metropolitan Opera and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 8-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-581. \$8.50.

Through the issuing of this album, Columbia has made it possible for record owners to listen to a full length performance of Wagner's *Die Walküre*. Victor several years ago presented a splendid uncut Act I and then followed it with Act II (with the cuts used in stage performances). Now we have Act III, every note of it, recorded faithfully and with generally fine balance, by Columbia.

The stars of this occasion are Helen Traubel as Bruennhilde, Herbert Janssen as Wotan, and Artur Rodzinsky and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York. Thrown in for good measure are Irene Jessner as Sieglinde, and an ensemble from the Metropolitan Opera Association, composed of the Misses Doree, Stellman, Jessner, Palmer, Doe, Kaskas, Lipton and Glaz as the eight Valkyries.

As far as we are concerned, Mme. Traubel is the star of the occasion. She sings with bright, gleaming tones of impressive metal and substance. Mme. Traubel possesses the intensity, the vocal resistance, the nobility of style to encompass this music most convincingly. She rises to great heights just when she should most. And so, the far-flung *Fort denn eile*, the pathos of *War es so schmählich?*, the long crescendo of *Der diese Liebe*, and the exaltation of *Auf dein gebot* are all memorably presented.

It is hard to put one's finger on just why Herbert Janssen's Wotan is less satisfactory than Mme. Traubel's Bruennhilde, but the fact remains that it is. Somehow the role never seems to have really belonged to him. This is true in stage performances as well. Mr. Janssen is pre-eminently a lyric artist, and the heroic characteristics of the chief of the Gods and the Lord of Valhalla seem to elude him. His farewell is only moderately successful and often sounds stuffy and muffled. There have been finer performances of this section before on records.

Also disappointing is the fact that through Columbia's obvious desire to star Mme. Traubel and Mr. Janssen, they have allowed the role of Sieglinde to become slighted. No matter what the importance of the star performers, the role of Sieglinde just cannot be brushed aside. Furthermore to her lot in this act falls one of the peaks of the entire score, the soaring passage *O hehres Wunder!* Great is the pity that Lotte Lehmann is no longer able to cope with this music, but despite the fact that Sieglinde's appearance in this act

is relatively brief, we wish that a more impressive singer than Mme. Jessner might have been secured —perhaps Astrid Varney. As long as Mme. Jessner was used, more prominent recording might have been accorded her, instead of relegating Sieglinde to a mere membership in the ensemble. One suspects a hurried realization of the error during the great phrase we have just referred to, for we can actually hear the men at the controls frantically trying to turn up the volume—alas, too late—and the moment passes, irretrievably dimmed.

The ensemble of Valkyries is sometimes swallowed in the vortex of the orchestra, but it might be argued that this often happens in actual performances. The recording of such a scene as this is no easy task and presents many and great difficulties.

Dr. Rodzinsky and his men perform with great spirit, particularly in the famous Ride and the opening portions of the act. Later they seem unduly loud, as in Wotan's Farewell, and the orchestral stream is not as clear as one might wish.

However, whatever we may take exception to must surely give way to a feeling of gratitude that this fine, sonorous album has been so well realized. We unreservedly admire the spirit and the enterprise that inspired this undertaking.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Bizet: Carmen**—Chanson du toréador. Act II. One side, and **Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia**—Largo al factotum. Act I. Leonard Warren (baritone) with Victor Orchestra conducted by William Tarrasch. 1-12" disc (V-11-8744). \$1.

**Wagner: Die Walküre**—So ist es denn aus mit den Ewigen. Act II. One side, and **Wagner: Tristan und Isolde**—Einsam wachend in der Nacht. (Bragâne's Warning). Act II. Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-8928). \$1.

**Moussorgsky: Boris Godounoff**—Farewell and Death—Prayer of Boris. Act IV, Scene 2. Alexander Kipnis (bass) with Victor Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Nicolai Berezowsky. Robert Shaw, Choral Director. 1-12" disc (V-11-8925). \$1.

It is indeed gratifying to at last enjoy a goodly selection of operatic records, and to get away from grand opera singers trying to adjust their heroic and inappropriate characteristics to the stream-lined prettiness of Hollywood, musical comedy, and the smoky atmosphere of the night club.

In this group we have Leonard Warren singing the celebrated cavatina of Figaro from Rossini's *Barber of Seville* and the *Toreador Song* from Bizet's *Carmen*. These selections are well recorded and they serve to display Mr. Warren's voice—the most magnificent and sumptuous baritone before the public today.

For the sake of truth and critical integrity, we are forced to report that the above selections are not too well suited to Mr. Warren's pontifical tone and style, and that only the size and quality of his voice carry all before them. Both Figaro and Escamillo are mercurial, slick and elegant characters—men who do things with a *chic*. One would not be likely to gather this from Mr. Warren's records, and though we admire the beauty of his voice, we must also confess that he does not possess the nimbleness and humor for a completely convincing performance of Figaro's brilliant music.

Blanche Thebom is presented this month in a portion of Fricka's denunciation of Wotan from *Walküre* and Brangaene's Warning from *Tristan und Isolde*. Competent rather than arresting is the adjective for these records. Miss Thebom has a fresh voice and musical intelligence, but she sounds like a junior edition of Fricka, her voice lacking the bite and accent to make the scene convincing. The singer's highest notes are also apt to thin out painfully.

Mr. Kipnis' selection is the Farewell and Death of Boris, taken from his *Boris Godounoff* album. On playing it over we repeated the impression we first received: fine recording, excellent balance and an authentic and moving account of one of the great scenes in grand opera. MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Verdi: Rigoletto**—*Parmi veder le lagrime*. Act II. One side, and **Verdi: La Traviata**—*De' miei bolenti spiriti*. Act II. Jan Peerce (tenor) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Sylvan Levin. 1-12" disc (V-11-8926). \$1.

**Verdi: Il Trovatore**—*Ai nostri monti*. Act IV. Kerstin Thorborg (mezzo-soprano) and Jan Peerce (tenor) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Sylvan Levin. One side, and **Verdi: Il Trovatore**—*Miserere*. Act IV. Zinka Milanov (soprano) and Jan Peerce (tenor) with Victor Chorale and Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-8782). \$1.

This batch of operatic recordings features Jan Peerce, tenor of the Metropolitan Opera. Mr. Peerce sings his solos from *Rigoletto* and *Traviata*, and the two duets from *Trovatore* with unflagging zeal and power, putting every scrap of resonance at his command on each individual tone. While this is all very well, we question whether it is the way to present Verdi's music. Variety and contrasts in tone-color, nuance and shading might be requirements, but here they are non-existent. Mr. Peerce seems incapable of a quietly sung tone, let alone a genuine *pianissimo*.

In the opera house, this tenor's voice sounds of good quality, but of moderate volume. Anyone listening to these records, who has not heard Mr. Peerce in person, would have every right to suppose that he could have given both Caruso and Tamagno a run for their money, and probably come

out on top. The recording volume-level is absurdly high. We pose the question: *Is it honest?*

Particularly flagrant is the handling of *Ai nostri monti* from *Trovatore*. No one would suspect that Mme. Thorborg (*Azucena*) is a sleepy old woman thinking of the future in a vague half-dream; or that Mr. Peerce is her son, trying to lull her tenderly back to sleep. Mme. Thorborg sings flat during her first phrases, and both singers deliver this dreamy duet, including the final measures (which should die away to a whisper), in full-throated, energetic tones. It is to be devoutly hoped that students who are looking for a correct interpretation of *Ai nostri monti*, will never hear of this record.

On the reverse is an excellent account of the *Miserere* from the same opera, employing Mme. Milanov and Mr. Peerce. Here energy and drama are required and obtained, and Leonora's tragic utterances suit Mme. Milanov's flamboyant style to perfection. Mr. Peerce's portion of this scene is his most satisfactory moment on any of these four surfaces.

The tenor's singing of the arias from *Rigoletto* and *Traviata* (the opera in which he made his Metropolitan debut) are also recorded at far too high a volume-level. They also become monotonous through lack of tonal variety.

As examples of round, vibrant tenor tones, unleashed at consistently high tension, these records might command admiration, and it must be reported that the singer handles the recitations with intelligence and a thrust based on textual sense.

The orchestra is also very loud, and when all is said and done, we advise you to play these selections with the controls turned as far down as possible.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Bellini: Norma**—*Mira, O Norma!* Act III. Zinka Milanov (soprano) and Margaret Harshaw (contralto) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-8924). \$1.

**Verdi: La Forza del Destino**—*Pace, pace, mio dio*. Act IV. One side, and **Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana**—*Voi lo sapete*. Zinka Milanov (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-8927). \$1.

Those of us who heard Zinka Milanov make her debut at the Metropolitan in *Trovatore* on December 17, 1937, and who have in succeeding years listened to her vibrant performances in *Aida*, *Forza del Destino*, *Ballo in Maschera*, *Don Giovanni*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Norma*, have been patiently awaiting the appearance of this prima-donna's first Victor records. Here they are!

Mme. Milanov is the possessor of what is indisputably the most beautiful voice of its particular kind heard during the present musical era. She is indeed the successor of such by-gone singers as Destinn, Raisa, Muzio and Ponselle.

The Jugoslav soprano's first selections are the arias *Pace mio Dio!* from Verdi's *La Forza del Destino*, *Voi lo sapete, o Mamma* from Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and the duet from Bellini's *Norma*, sung with Margaret Harshaw.

The vocal glamor, the sumptuously beautiful tones are indeed present and capitally recorded with no distortion of added volume, but somehow these records have elements which are bound to disappoint. For one thing the orchestral accompaniment supplied by Frieder Weissmann is flabby and lacking in rhythmical compulsion, and the *tempi* adhered to by both singer and conductor are generally slow and lazy.

Santuzza's aria should have far more urgency, more headlong rush and the drama inherent in these pages could stand pointing up several notches. *Pace mio Dio* seems rather disjointed in that it is merely a series of unrelated, beautifully sung phrases in a voice of superior quality. At one point, the performance comes inexplicably close to a full stop. There is little follow-through, and the emotion is superficial and not too convincing.

The duet from *Norma* will not efface memories of the fine Ponselle-Telva performance, except as a piece of superior reproduction. Miss Harshaw (*Adalgisa*) sounds large, solid and slightly unsteady, and both singers seem to have little rapport. The duet emerges more as a routine repetition by two large-voiced and not particularly congenial singers, than the teamwork of two artists artistically joined in presenting a touching account of Bellini's moving *scena*.

Having gotten all this off our chest, we must confess, that, if for no other reason than sheer sumptuousness of sound, we are genuinely pleased to add the rarely beautiful tones of Mme. Milanov's voice to the growing recorded-history of famous voices. It is only a pity that the faults pointed out could not have been avoided.

#### MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Ensembles. Glyndebourne Festival Opera Company conducted by Fritz Busch. 6-12" discs in album. The Mozart Opera Society, Vol. I. (Automatic sequence). \$15.

Several years ago the Mozart Opera Society (London) issued a recording of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* by the Glyndebourne Festival Opera Company conducted by Fritz Busch, in three volumes. This Society did it in rather an odd manner. The first volume contained the ensemble numbers from the whole four acts; the second volume contained the overture and the arias and duets from Acts I and II; the third volume contained the arias and duets from Acts III and IV.

A recent shipment of records from England contained a few copies of Volume I; an item that has

not been available in America for some years. Because of its importance we are listing it in the present issue of THE NEW RECORDS.

You will doubtless recall that this recording was made in the Glyndebourne Opera House, Glyndebourne, England, with Willi Domgraf-Fassbaender as *Figaro*, Aulikki Rautawaara as *La Contessa* and Audrey Mildmay as *Susanno*. Upon its release the critics in both England and America gave this recording the highest praise. Victor secured the rights to repress it in this country and issued it in three volumes (M-313, M-314 and M-315), arranging the selections in the order in which they come in the opera, rather than grouping them in the manner that they were issued in England. The complete Victor recording has not been generally available since before the war.

#### CHORAL



**Prokofiev: Alexander Nevsky, Op. 78**—Cantata for Chorus, Contralto Solo and Orchestra. Sung in English. The Westminster Choir (John Finley Williamson, Conductor) and Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) with Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-580. \$5.50.

*Alexander Nevsky* is a massive and thoroughly imposing work. It is typically Russian, and in it Prokofieff forsakes his polished, fastidious manner to abandon himself to soaring epic heights. There is much that is truly arresting and original in this music, and one is astounded at the virility and force of the composition.

Originally composed in 1938 in connection with the great Russian movie, *Alexander Nevsky*, it was subsequently completed in cantata form and presented at Moscow on May 17, 1939, under the composer's direction. America first heard it via the radio, when Leopold Stokowski conducted the NBC Symphony in a performance on March 7, 1943. He was assisted by the Westminster Choir and Jennie Tourel, mezzo-soprano. The first concert performance in this country occurred at Philadelphia on March 23, 1945, under the direction of Eugene Ormandy, conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Westminster Choir and Rosalind Nadell, mezzo-soprano.

In this album we have elements of these first performances, for Miss Tourel, Mr. Ormandy, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Westminster Choir are all present.

Columbia has done another thoroughly impressive job and has handled the voluminous choruses and massive orchestration with rare skill. Miss Tourel sings the long solo in the *Field of the Dead* section with her accustomed intelligence and fine-grained artistry. One of the most interesting sec-

tions is the *Battle On the Ice*, a completely original piece of music in which the bitter-cold edge of the ice and the grinding of the frozen river is heard marvellously suggested by the orchestration. The *Crusaders in Pskov* will doubtless also capture your fancy.

The performance here is superb and you will do well to hear this magnificent new work.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Selected Hymns.** National Radio Vespers Mixed Choir with organ accompaniment. 4-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set L. \$4.50.

Bibletone releases another album of sacred selections. This time it is a group of well-known hymns sung by the famous National Radio Vespers Mixed Choir. We believe that those persons who are interested in such recordings will find this album entirely satisfactory. The hymns are well sung and the recording is good. The surfaces of the records are reasonably quiet. A hymnal containing the words and music of each selection is included with this album.

The hymns in this group are: *The Lord's Prayer*; *Come Thou Almighty King*; *Battle Hymn of the Republic*; *Our God Our Help in Ages Past*; *Now the Day Is Over*; *Eternal Father Strong to Save*; *Fairest Lord Jesus*; and *Prayer of Thanksgiving*.

## PIANO



**Beethoven: Sonata in F minor, Op. 57.** ("Appassionata"). Five sides, and **Beethoven: Sonata in E flat, Op. 31, No. 3—Minuetto.** Artur Rubinstein (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1018. \$3.50.

Of the many recordings that have been made of this outstanding piano work of Beethoven, this is by all odds the most brilliant. As we listened to the completion of the finale movement, we could easily imagine the audience jumping to their feet and cheering in mad applause. And then we got out our recording by Schnabel and played it, followed it with the Gieseking version, and came to this conclusion. Schnabel's is the orthodox version in the old and well-founded tradition; Gieseking's is the poetic interpretation; Rubinstein's the brilliant one that will doubtless excite and thrill most audiences.

You may have your choice. It all depends on how you like your Beethoven played.

## VOCAL



**Tosti: Serenata.** One side, and **Tosti: L'Ultima Canzone.** Sung in Italian. Ezio Pinza (bass) with piano accompaniment by Gibner King. 1-12" disc (C-71687-D). \$1.

Pinza seems just as much at home with these

popular Italian songs as he does in more spectacular operatic arias. His many admirers, especially among the Italian speaking group, are going to like this record very much. However, we wish that Columbia had supplied orchestral accompaniments. We would have enjoyed these songs more. This is, of course, only a personal preference.

**Pinsuti: Bedouin Love Song.** One side, and **Clarke: The Blind Ploughman.** Norman Cordon (bass-baritone) with piano accompaniment by Archie L. Black. 1-10" disc (V-10-1176). 75c.

Records of bass solos in English only come along at rare intervals, and when one does appear, there is always a waiting group of buyers. The present disc will doubtless please this group, for the selections are popular ones and Mr. Cordon sings them beautifully. The reproduction is all that anyone could ask for.

**Romberg: When I Grow Too Old to Dream** (from "The Night is Young"). One side, and **Romberg: Who Are We to Say?** (from "Girl of the Golden West"). Allan Jones (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Ray Sinatra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1126). 75c.

Allan Jones has a great host of admirers and the selections on this disc are popular ones, so this record should have a large sale. Mr. Jones' excellent diction makes each word of his songs easily understood, and Ray Sinatra gives him splendid support with an adequate orchestra.

**Bach-Gounod: Ave Maria.** One side, and **Scott: Think on Me.** Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Pietro Cimara. 1-10" disc (C-17376-D). 75c.

Miss Pons gives a very pleasing rendition of Alicia Ann Scott's lovely ballad *Think On Me*. This is coupled with a not particularly distinguished performance of the Bach-Gounod *Ave Maria*. Better listen to this one before you buy it.

## DICTION



**The Littlest Angel.** Loretta Young (narrator) with the Ken Darby Choir and orchestra conducted by Victor Young. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-399. \$2.75.

This little album for children is worthy of more space than we have presently available. We can give it but a few short sentences, but if you are interested in a splendidly recorded original Christmas story, tender, reverent, mildly dramatic, and with a pleasing touch of humor here and there, you will do well to investigate Loretta Young's recording of *The Littlest Angel*. It is a Christmas story by Charles Tazewell, the well-known radio writer, and as Mr. Tazewell says: "Once in a fortunate moon, an idea comes out of nowhere—the plot falls into

line—the words form themselves on the page—and something is brought about that people hear and ask to hear again. That was the case of *The Littlest Angel*. He was a child prodigy who was born on a Christmas program several years ago—‘Manhattan At Midnight’ to be exact—a very strange place for him to appear—but he crawled into ears attuned to crime, adventure and gun-play and woke up the next morning to find himself a part of Christmas.”

**Cinderella**—Poem by Alice Duer Miller. Edna Best and supporting cast with musical score composed and directed by Victor Young. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-391. \$2.75.

Decca presents an excellent recorded edition of Alice Duer Miller’s poetic version of the ever-beloved *Cinderella*. Victor Young has composed and directs a most pleasing musical background. A fine supporting cast aids Miss Edna Best in giving a performance that calls for the highest praise. As usual, in its children’s albums, Decca displays excellent taste—one may make a gift of any of them, knowing that it will always give a great deal of pleasure and never offend.

Miss Miller’s poem is not a modern version of *Cinderella*, it is the old-fashioned story, following closely the original text, in poetic form.

**Robin Hood**. Basil Rathbone and supporting cast with Chorus and Brass Choir. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-583. \$4.50.

Basil Rathbone has added another excellent recording to his series for children that already contains splendid versions of *Treasure Island* and *A Christmas Carol*. The story of Robin Hood is one that most children know and enjoy, and with the fine cast of players who support Mr. Rathbone, and the well-trained choir that intersperses the daring adventures of the hero with appropriate songs of the period, we have a recorded performance that merits high praise.

**Stories for Children**. Margaret O’Brien (narrator) with sound effects and incidental music. 3-10" discs in album. Capitol Set CC-21. \$2.75.

Most of the children who have seen little Margaret O’Brien on the screen will very likely enjoy hearing her tell, what are said to be, her favorite stories. They are nicely told, and appropriate incidental music and sound effects make them even more attractive. The two stories that Margaret tells are familiar ones, that most children love; they are: “The Three Billy-Goats Gruff” and “The Town Musicians.”



## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

**The Victor Book of Musical Fun**. By Ted Cott. 169 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$1.50.

**Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death**. By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

**The Musical Scene**. By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

**Evenings With Music**. By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

**Adventures in Symphonic Music**. By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O’Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

**What We Hear in Music**. (Twelfth Revised Edition.) By Anne Shaw Faulkner. 704 pp. Illustrated RCA Victor Division (Camden, N. J.). Price \$2.25.

**The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music**. George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

**The History of Music in Performance**. Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

**NOTE:** All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector’s Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors’ Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer’s Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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*The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents.* Edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel. Illustrated. 431 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$6.

Lovers of the music of the immortal Bach will doubtless welcome this fine book. It has been carefully prepared and its contents are systematically and logically arranged. It is profusely illustrated.

This work is divided into seven major sections: Johann Sebastian Bach—A Portrait in Outline; Bach's Life in his own Writings and Other Evidence; Genealogy of the Bach Family; Obituary of Bach; Bach as Seen by His Contemporaries; On Bach's Life, Genius, and Works by J. N. Forkel (1802); The Rediscovery of Bach.

After reading the first twenty-four pages which contains Bach—A Portrait in Outline, one is in a position to go on with the wealth of supplementary matter that follows. When one is finished he feels that he has a very comprehensive picture of the "great divide" in music. Bach holds the unique position of dividing music into two parts—the music before Bach and the music since Bach. Bearing this in mind, it is important that every serious student give more than passing attention to the life and works of this all-important composer. We can think of a no more pleasant and profitable way of doing this than by carefully reading and considering *The Bach Reader* and by supplementing this with the study of the many fine Bach recordings that are presently available. At this point we cannot resist the urge to give recordings a little plug—when and where would one have an opportunity of hearing such Bach mas-

terpieces as *Art of the Fugue* or *Goldberg Variations*, if it were not for the little black discs.

*The Bach Reader* is a fine reference book, for it is carefully indexed, and while much of the data must necessarily be brief, a comprehensive bibliography will guide those who wish to delve further along any particular line of research.

\* \* \*

*Heritage of Fire.* By Friedelind Wagner and Page Cooper. 225 pp. Illustrated. Harper & Brothers (New York). Price \$3.

This is the first time that we have reviewed a book that is not primarily a musical one. Our first thought was not to consider it in these pages, but after reading it, we came to the conclusion that most persons who were interested in music would find it quite fascinating. It is the story of Wagner's granddaughter's life under the Nazis and her final escape to America through Toscanini's help in 1941.

Friedelind Wagner is the daughter of the great composer's only son Siegfried and Winifred Wagner. When Siegfried died in 1930, Winifred took over the direction of the Bayreuth Festivals and thus her children were more or less brought up in the Festspielhaus, where they were continually coming in contact with the musicians that came from time to time to this great shrine of music. Adolph Hitler was also a frequent visitor, even before his rise to power, and Winifred was an ardent Nazi from the very beginning. Friedelind had many opportunities to meet Hitler informally and her childish reactions as well as her opinions of the whole Nazi regime after she grew into young womanhood are most illuminating. She felt

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that she could not live under such a system of government and after long absences in France, England and Switzerland she finally came to America, where she is now living. She hopes soon to be an American citizen.

Of particular interest to our readers will be the glimpses one gets of many of the great musicians of our times. Beginning with Wagner's widow Cosima, the procession includes, among others, Toscanini, Furtwängler, Richard Strauss and Sir Thomas Beecham.

One might say that *Heritage of Fire* is a story of the Nazis with a musical background. It is not a horror story for neither Miss Wagner nor her friends were ever mistreated by Hitler and his gang. We found this little book mighty interesting and do not hesitate to recommend it. *Galli-Curci's Life of Song*. By C. E. Le Massena. 336 pp. Illustrated. The Paear Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.

This is definitely a book for Galli-Curci fans—an authorized biography by her former publicity agent, C. E. Le Massena. Mr. Massena hasn't missed an incident in the great diva's life from her birth in Italy in 1889 until her retirement in California in 1937. During her thirty years before the public on every continent of the globe, she had many interesting experiences and these make quite lively reading. However, Mr. Massena can't seem to realize that he is not writing publicity for Mme. Galli-Curci now, for he continually tells of the size of the audiences at various performances and the amount of the gate in comparison with the same statistics of concerts by the then competing artists. He also does not want the reader to forget that his heroine did sing on one occasion with the one and only Caruso. This occurred in Buenos Aires in a performance of *Lucia* in 1915, a year before she came to the United States.

However, if we can sort of skip over the publicity stuff and not let it annoy us, we can find much of interest in the life of one of the greatest operatic stars of this century—a life that was full to overflowing. Mme. Galli-Curci was a very ambitious artist and her ambition carried her far with many exciting experiences along the way.

Those who are making a collection of Galli-Curci records will be interested in the complete list of her recordings which will be found at the end of this volume. Some forty photographs of Mme. Galli-Curci, many of them in costume, add to the attractiveness of Mr. Massena's book.

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in *THE NEW RECORDS* are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

### ORCHESTRA



**Respighi: Gli Ucelli (The Birds).** Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw. 2-12" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-14. \$2.25.

It is interesting to note that Désiré Defauw has probably decided to re-make a number of the recordings that he made with the Brussels Conservatory Orchestra in the early 1930's with the Chicago Symphony, which he now conducts. A couple of months ago Grétry's *Céphale et Procris* (V-11-8825) was released, and this month we have Respighi's *Gli Ucelli (The Birds)*.

This work, which was first introduced to the American public by Fritz Reiner with the Cincinnati Orchestra, is not of any great moment. However, the music is piquant and clever and occasionally amusing, and Respighi's well-known skill at devising effective orchestrations serves him in good stead. These records provide a rather pleasant fifteen minutes of unusual music. The Chicago Symphony plays with fine spirit and the reproduction is of the best.

**Handel: The Messiah—Hallelujah Chorus.** One side, and **Mendelssohn: Athalie—War March of the Priests.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-8985). \$1.

A modern recording of the *War March of the Priests* is very welcome, for we cannot think of any other record of this selection except the very old one by the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York under Mengelberg's direction. However, we can't see why many persons would be interested in a purely orchestral version of the *Hallelujah Chorus* when several excellent choral recordings are available.

**Humperdinck: Hansel und Gretel—Dream Pantomime.** National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Kindler. 1-12" disc (V-11-8948). \$1.

A well-recorded and beautifully played version of this fascinating music, which will probably take the place of the older recording of this selection by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. This disc should be of interest to those persons who are always looking for suitable "mood" music for their home movies.

**Shostakovich: Symphony No. 6, Op. 53.** Nine sides and **Kabalevsky: Colas Breugnon**—Overture. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-585. \$5.50.

This is one of the best symphonic sets we have ever listened to. We realize that that is a sweeping statement, but after listening carefully to the nine sides on which Shostakovich's Sixth Symphony is recorded, this was the impression we received.

Not only are Fritz Reiner and his Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in superb form, but the orchestral balance achieved is worthy of unwavering attention and the recording itself is one of the most realistic and clear-cut we have heard.

This is a fortunate thing, for the Sixth is perhaps the best and most characteristic of Shostakovich's symphonies, incorporating all that composer's most striking attributes. The long opening movement, which is, unconventionally enough, a *largo*, is one of the most sustained pieces of poignant, introspective music that has come out of Russia in half a century. Whether it appeals to one or not, there is nothing quite like its brooding loneliness of mood in the whole range of symphonic literature. The ensuing two movements are bold and brilliant, characteristic of Shostakovich's gift for dazzling, almost impudent writing. They form a fine contrast to the *Largo*, which, by the way, is over half the total length of the symphony.

Stokowski recorded this work with the Philadelphia Orchestra for Victor several years ago, but excellent as that earlier set still is, it lacks the sincerity and clarity of Mr. Reiner's stunning job.

On the odd side of the last record we find Kabalevsky's Overture to *Colas Breugnon* thrown in for good measure. MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Rossini Overtures.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set V-2. \$8.50.

V-18-0005 *Barber of Seville*—Overture.

V-18-0006 *La Gazza Ladra*—Overture.

V-18-0007 *La Cenerentola*—Overture.

V-18-0008 *Il Signor Bruschino*—Overture.

William Tell—Passo a sie.

This month Victor releases its second album of Red Seal De Luxe records. The selections included in this album were very likely chosen because of the wide scope of their orchestrations. Victor wanted to show what it could faithfully record, and to demonstrate the reproduction it was capable of obtaining on the new silent plastic surfaces. In other words, Victor wanted to show top-notch Victor reproduction at its best. We can certainly affirm that this has been accomplished.

Aside from this, and to make the records as attractive to the general public as possible, a group of melodious Rossini overtures were selected—ones that most any music lover might enjoy. And then the mighty Toscanini was chosen to direct the excellent

NBC Symphony—certainly no one could ask for more.

If you are interested in record reproduction, note the recording of the snare drums in the overture to *La Gazza Ladra*, and to the second violinists rapping the wooden parts of their bows on the strings in the *Il Signor Bruschino* number. Originally, in this latter piece, Rossini, for a comic touch, instructed the violinists to draw their bows over their lamp shades, but we understand that now the usual procedure is the one that Toscanini uses in this recording.

If you have a good phonograph, this set of discs will give you an opportunity to hear record reproduction at its greatest point of development.

**Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1020. \$3.50.

This recording was announced to the dealers in September 1942 but for some reason was never made available. We had quite forgotten it until it appeared on Victor's list for this month. We played it over a couple of times, and then we got out the old recording of the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski, and we were entirely satisfied with the Stokowski version. We have always felt that Stokowski was, and is, supreme in fanciful music of this character. However, that is only one man's judgment and should be considered as such. We know some music lovers who prefer the Stock recording of this work with the Chicago Symphony. These persons are not very numerous but they are certainly entitled to their opinion.

**Waldteufel: The Skaters Waltz.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (V-11-8949). \$1.

Of course, we have no idea why Toscanini chose to record *The Skaters Waltz*. Maybe the Maestro likes it. Perhaps it brings back some fond memories of his youth, or something. We don't know, but we do know that he has done a grand job and anyone who would like a recording of this old favorite will do well to select his version. Also, it makes a fine record to demonstrate a good phonograph because it takes a good reproducing instrument to bring out the ring of the triangle which is sounded considerably during the playing of the first side of this disc.

## CONCERTO

**Beethoven: Concerto No. 3 in C minor.** Artur Rubinstein (piano) with NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1016. \$4.50.

This album contains an actual performance, for these records were made while Artur Rubinstein and Arturo Toscanini were playing the Beethoven Concerto No. 3 at a broadcast performance in Radio City on October 29, 1944.



Considering the fact that it is a performance, the recording is quite passable, though this is by far the ideal or definitive album of this concerto, as far as we are concerned. There is too much glitter and shine for this music. You feel it is not really Beethoven at his most serious, at his most profoundly considered. There is an undeniable virtuosity, but there is also a feeling of hurry, of slickness, which is not helped by a reproduction which is decidedly on the bright and brash side.

This type of music requires the sort of recording technique that was found and employed in England and Germany before the war. Some of Beecham's foreign recordings have it. Here we find a lack of roundness, of mellow ness, of depth—and the piano (especially the upper part of the scale) is decidedly shallow; at times even tinny. We suspect that there were too many highs and not enough lows stressed in this recording. Loudness and brashness are our most plaguing and besetting sins as a recording people. The first of these faults is thankfully absent here.

One also questions whether Mr. Rubinstein is just the pianist for this concerto. Assuredly he does not get to the roots of Beethoven's music as Schnabel does in album (M-194), nor is he as well recorded—not by a long shot—as Iturbi (M-801). Toscanini, for all his clarity and drive, also seems a bit off to us. There is a needless sense of tension and rush. After playing the album through, one feels like asking, "Why the rush?"

However, for those who want to have a Beethoven concerto recorded during an actual performance with two of our most distinguished and glamorous contemporary musical names, the present album will fill the bill neatly.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Brahms: Concerto No. 2 in B flat major, Op. 83.**  
Rudolf Serkin (piano) with The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-584. \$6.50.

This newest album containing Brahms' celebrated piano concerto runs immediately into stiff competition, unusually so, for it has two famous sets to contend with, the Horowitz-Toscanini recording (M-740) and the earlier but still excellent Schnabel-Boult (M-305).

Horowitz and Toscanini are both *virtuosos* of the highest order, names to conjure with. They are not only capable but they also actually create an atmosphere of excitement, which is not easy to duplicate. Schnabel is a great pianist, particularly in the works of Beethoven and Brahms, and his impressive authority and musical logic always draw a multitude of fastidious followers. Not so much can be said for the BBC Orchestra under Adrian Hoult, which sounds thin and stereotyped compared to Toscanini or to Ormandy and the luscious quality of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Probably this present issue is the best from a recording standpoint. Rudolf Serkin is a distinguished pianist of the romantic school and his account of

Brahms' quasi-symphonic concerto is in every sense the work of a big artist. The piano has been as well recorded as it ever has been, and this, as those acquainted with problems of acoustics know, is no easy matter. The Philadelphia Orchestra also emerges round, mellow and sonorous. None of those exaggerated and disturbingly brash and piercing highs are present, and the result is that the concerto takes on a quality of great solidity and dignity. Particularly happy is the beautiful tone of the 'cello section in the lovely theme that adorns the third movement, *Andante*.

Unless one is particularly drawn to the playing of Schnabel, the choice narrows down between the Horowitz-Toscanini and the present set, with this to be solidly said in favor of the latter: that the "breaks" between the Columbia records are far better planned than in the Victor set.

Personally, we feel unusually drawn to Serkin's selfless dedication to Brahms' music. He may not have all the dynamic glitter that belongs to Horowitz, but in our opinion he seems a more logical interpreter for broadly romantic music of this type. D.

**Bruch: Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26.** Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 3-12" discs in album. \$3.50.

And now we have another recording of the Bruch Concerto No. 1 in G minor! It was only three short years ago that the very fine version of this work by Milstein with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York was released. It would seem that Victor feels that if Columbia has Milstein, it has Menuhin, and it is going to show the musical public that it can issue a recording of this work that is just as fine as Columbia's. That is all very well, but we feel that record collectors generally would rather have the recorded repertory expanded with selections that have not been recorded, or with selections that have not been recorded adequately, than to have numerous versions of the same composition.

There is no question but that the present version by Menuhin is fully equal to the earlier one by Milstein, and it is our thought that it is just a matter of personal preference which is the better. Record stocks are continually increasing so that it should not be any trouble to find a dealer who has both recordings on hand for your selection.

## CHAMBER MUSIC



**Mozart: Quintet in C major (K.515).** Budapest String Quartet with Milton Katims (viola). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-586. \$4.50.

During May 1787, Mozart wrote two quintets for strings and both of them are now available played by the Budapest String Quartet with Milton Katims (viola). The Quintet in G minor, K.516, was released by Columbia in December 1942 and met with

instant and continued success. As both of these works are considered among the finest examples of Mozart's writing in the field of chamber music, it is very likely that those persons who added the first album (Columbia Set M-526) to their libraries will wish to obtain the present one also.

The *Quintet in C major, K.515*, is not quite so sombre as the one in *G minor*, and while it has its serious moments, it is much more on the bright side than its partner. It is certainly lovely music to listen to, and we do not hesitate to recommend it to anyone who is at all interested in chamber music.

Recordings of both of these quintets have been available previously by other artists but none of these earlier versions should be considered now that recordings by the incomparable Budapest players may be had.

**Mozart: Sonatas for Organ and Orchestra.** E. Power Biggs (organ) and The Arthur Fiedler Sinfonietta conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1019. \$3.50.

Whoever thought up the idea of this album—Mr. Fiedler, Mr. Biggs or someone at Victor—it is an excellent one! The album contains unusual fare in these six Sonatas for *Organ and Orchestra*, for the fact is self-evident, that it is only rarely possible to combine a first-class body of instrumentalists with a really fine organ.

The organ and orchestra form an unusual combination. However, except when the organ is unduly exposed (which is not often), it is less obtrusive than one might have supposed, and by the time one has played three of these sonatas, the ear is so accustomed to the blending that one finds the tone of the organ hardly noticeable.

These sonatas would refute the idea that Mozart was only a composer of delicate *rococco* filigrees and sensitive designs. This is full-blooded, forthright music written in a straightaway style, with strong, broad, downward strokes of the orchestral brush. Hearing this work is an invigorating experience; but it can also be a fairly monotonous one, should you elect to play the album through at one sitting.

The lay public is apt to forget that Mozart was much associated with the organ at different periods in his short life. These sonatas, for instance, were often performed by the fine court orchestra in Salzburg cathedral with Mozart himself at the organ. Moreover, we have the picture of Mozart playing the famous old organ of St. Thomas Church, in Leipzig, where, 39 years before, Johann Sebastian Bach had thundered forth his own cosmic fugues and fantasias.

E. Power Biggs at the organ and Arthur Fiedler leading the Fiedler Sinfonietta accomplish their job *con amore*. An unusually sane job of recording and balance has been achieved.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

## OPERA



**James Melton in Operatic Arias.** James Melton (tenor) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Paul Breisach and Sylvan Levin. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1013. \$3.50.

V-11-8929 Mozart: *Don Giovanni*—Il mio tesoro.  
Mozart: *The Magic Flute*—O Image Angel.

V-11-8930 Massenet: *Manon*—Le rêve.  
Massenet: *Manon*—Ah! Fuyez, douce image.

V-11-8931 Wagner: *Lohengrin*—In fernem Land.  
Wagner: *Die Meistersinger*—Preislied.

Curiously enough, James Melton comes off best in the most difficult of the six arias he presents in this album of operatic excerpts. We refer to his singing of the terribly exacting *Il mio tesoro* from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. With the exception of one swallowed high note (an A natural), this is a surprisingly fine job. The scale passages are well encompassed and the rhythm is admirably maintained. It is probably the best performance on domestic records since John McCormack's classic one, though, needless to say, it does not in any way equal it. Nuance and shading would have helped the aria from *The Magic Flute*, but it is cleanly and freshly sung as Mr. Melton uses the English text of Ruth and Thomas Martin now employed in the Metropolitan's performances of the opera (one of the few that fares excellently, sung in English).

In the two selections from Massenet's *Manon*, Mr. Melton has not the delicacy, sensitivity or command of *mezza voce* to make a successful record of *Le Rêve*. Nor is his French enunciation always correct—"En merchant je viens de faire *on reve*," for instance. He fares better in a well considered *Ah fuyez douce image*, which he wisely transposes half a tone downward. We like this record best, next to his *Don Giovanni*.

The last two sides are devoted to Wagner. It is hard to imagine anyone selecting Mr. Melton's record of *Walther's Preislied* from *Meistersinger*, when one by Lauritz Melchior is available; the same may be said for *Lohengrin's Narrative*. It is hard to accept Mr. Melton as a Wagnerian tenor, with his characteristically lyric Irish voice. However, truth compels us to report that these two selections are very competently sung.

Why Victor allowed Mr. Melton to record the *Manon* and Wagner arias, when all four are already in its catalogue by Richard Crooks, a tenor who much resembles Melton in both voice and style, is hard to fathom. At a recent concert in Philadelphia, Mr. Melton sang—and very charmingly—the aria *Fantaisies aux Divins Mensonges* from Delibes' *Lakmé*. Since there is no record of this number in present-day catalogues, wouldn't this have been preferable in lieu

of one of the *Manon* arias?

Mr. Melton's voice and clear diction have been faithfully recorded, but these records are on the loud side, and we advise you to turn your controls well down while playing them.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Mozart: Il Re Pastore**—*L'amerò, sarò costante*. Act II. Sung in Italian. Lily Pons (soprano) with Columbia Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. Violin solo by Mishel Pastro. 1-12" disc (C-71696-D). \$1.

**Wagner: Tristan und Isolde**—*Liebestod*. Act III, Scene 4. Helen Traubel (soprano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (C-12212-D). \$1.

*Il Re Pastore* was written when Mozart was only 19 years old. From this completely forgotten opera, the exquisite aria, *L'amerò saro costante* is still heard in the concert hall today, provided there is a singer with the security and style to hazard its challenging difficulties.

In the early days of the phonograph this aria was represented in the Victor catalogue by a particularly limpid record sung by Nellie Melba with Jan Kubelik supplying the violin obbligato. Later, during the electric period, Elisabeth Rethberg was enlisted to perpetuate it on wax, and Gabrielle Ritter-Ciampi, one of Paris' truly great cantatrices, also made a superb but not too well recorded disc for Polydor.

Now Columbia has issued this marvellous example of a great Mozart aria, we believe, for the first time in its entirety. Lily Pons is the vocalist, while Mishel Pastro supplies the violin obbligato, and Bruno Walter and a group called the Columbia Opera Orchestra provide the rich orchestral background.

Mme. Pons has the elegance and the musicianship for this aria. The fact that she is a stylist of considerable distinction is a matter of signal importance in this music. The singer's tone is pure and steady and it is obvious that she feels what she is doing. A more flowing legato in the scale passages of the *cadenza* is all one could ask further.

As for Mme. Traubel, the selection here presented, *Isoldens Liebestod*, is taken from her recent album of excerpts from *Tristan*, and issued as a single record. This is a distinguished account of one of Wagner's greatest moments, the soprano's heroic voice rising impressively to the great climax.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

## CHORAL



**Familiar Hymns.** St. Luke's Choristers with organ accompaniments by Chauncey Haines. William Ripley Dorr, conductor. Solos by Philip Haynes (boy soprano). 4-10" discs in album. Capitol Set B-D 15. \$2.50.

For nearly a year we have been waiting for this album of records. Last Christmas, when the St. Luke's Choristers presented their album of Christmas Carols (Capitol Set B-D 2), which was by far the most attractive collection of Christmas music available, and in our opinion still heads the list of such recordings, it was announced that this fine male choir would issue an album of standard hymns. It just arrived and it was well worth waiting for.

Up until the time that Capitol decided to record the choir of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Long Beach, California, those persons who were interested in recordings of a choir consisting exclusively of men and boys, and there are many such persons, had to turn to England for their records. The English catalogues contains scores of records by such outstanding choirs as those of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, St. Margaret's, Westminster, and the Temple Church, London. We are glad to welcome the St. Luke's Choristers, and hope that this is just a beginning in a long series of recordings. Perhaps some day they will give us some recordings of some of the fine music that has been written for the Episcopal Communion and Morning Prayer services.

Most of the selections in this album were recorded in St. Paul's Cathedral, Los Angeles, where the singers had the advantage of its fine organ with Chauncey Haines at the console. In several of the hymns, solos by the very talented young boy soprano, Philip Haynes, are featured. Of especial interest to us was the very lovely descant of Dion Kennedy sung to *Onward, Christian Soldiers*. Choirmasters will doubtless find this beautiful new rendition of this fine old hymn of prime interest.

Perhaps the St. Luke's Choristers do not sing with quite the precision of the English choirs, but then they have not had the years of experience in making records that the foreign choirs have had, and it is our thought that they have made a most auspicious start and great things may be expected of them. This, we are sure, will be true, if the present set of records receives the support which is its due. William Ripley Dorr has left nothing undone to bring this choir to its present state of perfection. His section of boy sopranos sing with a smoothness and clarity that shows many hours of careful and painstaking training. Patience must be Mr. Dorr's watchword, for teen-age choir boys are a group apart and unlimited patience and a very special skill are needed to bring about the results that he has accomplished.

Among the better-known hymns of the dozen contained in this album are: *Now the Day is Over*; *Onward, Christian Soldiers*; *Abide With Me*; *Lead, Kindly Light*; *Jesus, Lover of My Soul*; *Holy, Holy, Holy*; and *The Church's One Foundation*. R.

**Christmas Carols**—Sonora Choristers directed by Eugene Mott with organ accompaniment. 3-10" discs in album. Sonora Set MS-473. \$2.

Eugene Mott, who is known for his vocal ar-

rangements, and his conducting for such popular radio programs as the Dubonnet Hour, the Ford Sunday Evening Hour and others, and who is presently Associate Musical Director of the St. Louis Municipal Opera, has organized this chorus of some twenty mixed voices and skillfully directs them in these well-known Christmas Carols. We presume that the vocal arrangements, which are very attractive, are his.

The selections that Mr. Mott has chosen for these records include: *Adeste Fideles*; *Silent Night*; *Joy to the World*; *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*; *The First Nowell*; *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing* and a half-dozen others equally familiar.

While the reproduction is not the best that we have heard, it is not bad, and considering the popularity of all of the selections, the pleasing vocal arrangements, and the modest price of this album, it is worth investigation, if you are interested in records of Christmas music to celebrate the holiday.

## VOCAL



**Schubert: Die Winterreise**—Six Songs. Lotte Lehmann (soprano) with piano accompaniments by Paul Ulanowsky. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-587. \$2.75.

Lotte Lehmann, with the appearance of this album, completes her singing of Schubert's *Die Winterreise*, for the soprano now adds the missing six songs. Mme. Lehmann had recorded eleven of these in Victor album M-692, and seven others in Columbia M-466.

The missing songs with which Mme. Lehmann completes her recording of the cycle are as follows: No. 3, *Gefor'ne Tranen*; No. 4, *Erstarrung*; No. 9, *Irrlicht*; No. 12, *Einsamkeit*; No. 14, *Der Greise Kopf*, and No. 24, *Der Leiermann*.

*Die Winterreise* (The Winter Journey) is set to poems by the German lyric poet, Wilhelm Muller (1794-1827), and was composed by Schubert during 1827 and 1828. The songs reflect the rather lugubrious thoughts of a young poet, who wanders about the frozen, wintry countryside seeking solace from the fact that the lady he loves has spurned him. As one might naturally suppose from the contents of Muller's poems, Schubert's music is steeped in deep melancholy.

Lotte Lehmann appears to be in capital voice in this Columbia set. Time does not seem to have left an imprint on her singing which is firm and fresh, charged with that warmth and deep human understanding, which makes her singing of *Lieder* such a unique and special experience.

As in the other albums of *Die Winterreise*, Mme. Lehmann enjoys the altogether artistic and sympathetic collaboration of Paul Ulanowsky at the piano.

Technically, these records are a first rate job.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Romberg: The Desert Song**—Selections. Kitty Carlisle (soprano), Wilbur Evans (baritone), Felix Knight (tenor) with Jeffry Alexander Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Isaac Van Grove. 5-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-370. \$4.25.

Here is another in Decca's fine list of recordings of selections from popular musical plays and well up to the high standard that was set by *Oklahoma!*, *The Merry Widow*, *Bloomer Girl*, *Carousel* and *Porgy and Bess*. Decca has certainly gone in for recordings of this kind in a big way and in practically every case has done a bang-up job. It just occurred to us, that in future years a set of these albums will surely be mighty interesting. We would certainly give a lot to have such fine recordings of the shows that we took our best girl to see when we were young and gay. Very fond memories would attend them, we are sure.

The choice of the soloists for this set is excellent—all tried and true artists who have appeared in former Decca musical-show recordings. The Jeffry Alexander Chorus does splendid work, and this is important for the chorus has plenty to do in this production. All are supported by a highly satisfactory orchestra under the spirited direction of Isaac Van Grove.

A booklet giving a synopsis of the story and the words of all of the songs adds greatly to the attractiveness of this fine album.

R.

**Hymns of Inspiration.** J. Alden Edkins (The Hymn Singer) with organ accompaniments. 3-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set D. \$3.50.

**Hymns of Faith.** J. Alden Edkins (The Hymn Singer) with organ accompaniments. 3-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set K. \$3.50.

Bibletone has recently released these two albums containing many of the most popular gospel hymns sung by J. Alden Edkins, who is known to thousands of radio listeners as "The Hymn Singer." Mr. Edkins has a voice that is perfectly suited for the singing of such selections and his fine diction makes every word stand out crystal clear. Those of us who like to hear these old familiar hymns want to understand the words for they are of equal importance with the music—perhaps more important. A hymnal giving the words and music of the selections is supplied with each album.

"Hymns of Inspiration" contains the following selections: *In the Garden*; *I Think When I Read That Sweet Story of Old*; *Shepherd Show Me How to Go*; *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*; *Jesus the Very Thought of Thee*; and *Take My Life and Let It Be*.

"Hymns of Faith" contains the following selections: *My Faith Looks Up to Thee*; *He Leadeth Me; Just As I Am*; *I Love to Tell the Story*; *My Jesus I Love Thee*; and *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*.

- A Lawrence Tibbett Program.** Lawrence Tibbett (baritone) with orchestral accompaniments. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1015. \$4.50.
- V-11-8860 *Porgy and Bess*—I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'. Goin' Home.
- V-11-8861 *La Tosca*—Te Deum. *The Masked Ball*—Eri tu.
- V-11-8862 *Tannhäuser*—O du mein holder Abendstern. On the Road to Mandalay.
- V-11-8863 *Merry Mount*—'Tis an Earth Defiled. *The King's Henchman*—Nay, Maccus, Lay Him Down.

Victor has taken eight of Mr. Tibbett's recordings, that have all been available before, and coupled them on these four discs, and is issuing them in an album this month. We feel that excellent judgment has been used in making the selection from the many recordings that Mr. Tibbett has made, for the album contains examples of the various facets of his art. From the list of the selections given above, you will note that we have arias from Italian, German and American opera and a ballad or two. Mr. Tibbett's many admirers will doubtless find this album of interest.

**Pestalozza: Ciribiribin.** Sung in Italian. One side, and **Kreisler: The Old Refrain.** Grace Moore (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1152). 75c.

We recall John McCormack's recording of *The Old Refrain* and we seem to remember a very pleasing lilt to this song that was quite attractive. It is entirely missing in Miss Moore's rendition. She seems to be laboring so hard to make the words distinguishable, and what words—refrain, rain, remain, plain, pain, pane, explain, gain, obtain, and room, gloom, perfume, bloom. We rather feel that McCormack did not use the same lyrics or if he did he hid them with his fine artistry—one didn't notice how really bad they were.

A not very brilliant performance of the scintillating *Ciribiribin* occupies the second side of this undistinguished disc.

**I Wonder as I Wander** (arr. John J. Niles). Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. One side, and **Mignone: Cantiga de ninar.** Sung in Portuguese. Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano) with Lester Hodges (piano) and Lucien Schmit (violoncello). 1-10" disc (V-10-1181). 75c.

This little disc contains a queer combination—an Appalachian Folk Song and a Portuguese lullaby. However, they are both mighty interesting and are not nearly so far apart as one would think. Miss Swarthout sings each of them beautifully and we have her to thank for two unusual little songs that are a

joy to listen to. Certainly they are more in her line than *Beat Out Dat Rhythm on a Drum* and *Right as the Rain*, those two gems she offered us a little earlier this year. Her royalty check may not be so large for the present disc, but what she loses financially will be more than offset by her gain artistically.

## HARPSICHORD



**Bach: Goldberg Variations** (Aria and 30 Variations). Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 6-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1022. \$6.75.

The *Goldberg Variations*, which are referred to by Virgil Thompson as "One of the monuments of musical art," are here presented by Wanda Landowska, the greatest harpsichordist of our day.

This is indeed a very important issue. The *Variations* are recorded complete, all thirty of them, and the recording was made by Mme. Landowska in June 1945, in the New York studios of Victor.

For many years devotees of Bach's music presented in its unadulterated original form were up against it in securing a recording of the *Variations*. True enough, Mme. Landowska had made them a number of years ago, in France. But this album was hard to get, for it was issued by "His Master's Voice" in a limited Bach Society edition, available through subscription only.

Now this wonderful composition played by its most distinguished living interpreter, is available to the general public, and though we have never heard the earlier recording, Victor informs us that "Improved technique for capturing the true tone of the harpsichord dictated the present recording," which may well be.

Virgil Thomson in reviewing Mme. Landowska's performance of the *Goldberg Variations*, when she played them in Town Hall, New York, on February 21, 1942, wrote as follows: "That she should play for two hours without striking a false note is admirable, of course that she should play thirty pieces varying greatly in volume without ever allowing us to hear any thumping down of the keys proves a mastery of the harpsichord that is, to my knowledge, unique. That she should phrase and register the 'Goldberg Variations' with such clarity and freedom that they all sound like new pieces is evidence of some quality at work besides mere musicianship, though the musicianship does run high in this case." And to quote Mr. Thomson's penetrating article still further: "All musically and expert qualities are observable at their highest in Mme. Landowska's harpsichord-playing. But so are they in the work of many another virtuoso. Her especial and unique grandeur is her rhythm. It is modern quantitative scansion at its purest. Benny Goodman himself can do no better. And it is Bach's rhythm, as that must have been."

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

## DICTION



**Grimm's Fairy Tales**—"Snow-White and Rose-Red" —"Dr. Know-All"—"The Three Brothers." Earle Ross (narrator) with musical background. 3-10" discs in album. Black and White Set BW-50. \$2.75.

**Grimm's Fairy Tales**—"The Dragon and His Grandmother"—"The Three Feathers"—"The Town Musicians of Bremen." Earle Ross (narrator) with musical background. 3-10" discs in album. Black and White Set BW-51. \$2.75.

Earle Ross, who is known to a vast radio audience through his daily coast-to-coast broadcasts, recites in his inimitable way six well-known fairy tales. An appropriate musical background adds to the interest of these recordings. Mr. Ross makes each character stand out clearly—so different is each that one would think that a cast of players were making these recordings rather than one man.

Children who are too old for nursery rhymes and are not yet ready for the classics will find these records just right. They have been nicely recorded and they are housed in most attractive albums with the covers printed in gay colors.

**On the Night Before Christmas.** Fibber McGee and Molly with Teeny, the King's Men, and Billy Mills and his Orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Capitol Set CC-20. \$2.75.

A lot of grown-ups are going to buy this album for the kiddies, and we'll warrant that most of them are going to listen-in while the little ones are enjoying these records. Fibber McGee tells just that sort of story—one that kind of pulls at the heartstrings of children of all ages and yet is sprinkled generously with homely humor. You have to hear this recording to appreciate it. However, if you are familiar with Fibber McGee, you will find that it is just the sort of Christmas skit that you would expect him to put on.

## VIOLIN



**Massenet**—arr. Marsick: **Thais**—Meditation. One side, and **Dvorák**—arr. Wilhelmj: **Humoresque**. Mischa Elman (violin) with piano accompaniment by Leopold Mittman. 1-12" disc (V-11-8950). \$1.

Elman has previously made recordings of both of these selections for Victor with other accompanists. Now he offers brand new versions with the benefit of modern reproduction. They are grand, and this disc should enjoy an immense sale, for it contains the two most popular selections for the violin we can think of.

## PIANO



**Popular Moderns.** Oscar Levant (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-560. \$3.50.

C-71636-D de Falla: *El Amor Brujo*—Fire Dance.

- 1) *Lecuona*: Andalucia — Malaguena.
- 2) *Poulenc*: Pastourelle.

C-71637-D Debussy: 1) *Golliwog's Cake Walk*.

- 2) *La fille aux cheveux de lin*.

Debussy: *Claire de lune*.

C-71638-D Poulenc: *Mouvements perpétuels* 1, 2, 3.

- 1) *de Falla*: *The Three Cornered Hat* —Miller's Dance. 2) *Albeniz*: *Tango in D major*.

Mr. Levant has chosen a number of selections in the modern piano repertory and has played them *a la Levant*. If you like your music *a la Levant*, you will be crazy about these recordings, and if you don't, it is possible that they will drive you crazy. The choice is just as simple as that.

If you are not familiar with Mr. Levant's style, better listen to this set before you buy it.

## MISCELLANEOUS



**Benjamin**—arr. Primrose: 1) *Jamaican Rumba*. 2) *Matty Rag*. One side, and **Benjamin**—arr. Primrose: 1) *Cookie*. 2) *From San Domingo*. William Primrose (viola) with piano accompaniments by Vladimir Sokoloff. 1-12" disc (V-11-8947). \$1.

William Primrose has taken several of Arthur Benjamin's clever and witty little pieces that were probably written for the piano and arranged them for solo viola with piano accompaniment. They are amusing trifles and Mr. Primrose plays them with skill and in what seems to us just the proper spirit. Vladimir Sokoloff gives him splendid support at the piano.

We might mention that Arthur Benjamin is a compatriot of Mr. Primrose's, having been born in Australia but having spent most of his adult life in London, where he has been on the staff of the Royal Conservatory of Music since 1926. He has had many brilliant pupils, among whom might be mentioned the talented composer, Benjamin Britten.

**R.A.F. Over Essen.** Actually recorded inside the bomber over the target. 1-10" disc. (V-RAF 11). \$1.35.

In a shipment from England came a few copies of this interesting disc. One side was recorded in a bomber of the R.A.F. while the plane was on a bombing mission over Essen. Although the tenseness of the situation is very evident, some of the remarks of the crew are quite humorous. The reverse side of the disc contains a short talk by Air Chief Marshall Sir Arthur Harris. This record will doubtless have real historic value in the years to come.

# Christmas Gift Suggestions



## ORCHESTRA



**Beethoven:** *Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125.* ("Choral.") Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy with Stella Roman (soprano), Enid Szantho (contralto), Frederick Jagel (tenor), Nicola Moscova (bass) and Westminster Choir. 8-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-591. \$8.50.

**Borodin:** *Symphony No. 2 in B minor.* Seven sides, and **Glière:** *Russian Sailors' Dance* (from "The Red Poppy"). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-528. \$4.50.

**Brahms:** *Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90.* Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1007. \$4.50.

**Dukas:** *The Sorcerer's Apprentice.* Three sides, and **Rimsky-Korsakov**—arr. Stokowski: *Ivan the Terrible*—Prelude to Act III. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 2-12" discs (V-17501 and V-17502) in album. Victor Set M-717. \$2.50.

**Mendelssohn:** *Symphony No. 4 in A major, Op. 90.* (Italian.) The Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 4-12" discs (C-11956D to C-11959D) in album. Columbia Set M-538. \$4.50.

**Rimsky-Korsakov:** *Scheherazade—Symphonic Suite, Op. 35.* Nine sides, and **Rimsky-Korsakov:** *March* (from *Tsar Sultan Suite*). San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 5-12" discs in album. Victor Set DM-920. \$5.50.

**Schubert:** *Symphony No. 6 in C.* Seven sides, and **Mozart:** *Eine kleine Nachtmusik—Rondo.* London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1014. \$4.50.

**Shostakovich:** *Symphony No. 5, Op. 47.* Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-520. \$5.50.

**Sibelius:** *Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39.* Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by John Barbirolli. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-532. \$5.50.

**Sibelius:** *Symphony No. 5 in E flat major, Op. 82.* Seven sides, and **Jarnefelt:** *Praeludium.* Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-514. \$4.50.

**Strauss:** *Till Eulenspiegel's lustige Streiche, Op. 28.* Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-12" discs in album. Victor Set V-1. \$4.50.

**Strauss:** *Don Quixote, Op. 35.* ("Fantastic Variations on a Knightly Theme.") Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner, with Gregor Piatigorsky ('cello). 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-506. \$5.50.

**Tschaikowsky:** *Romeo and Juliet*—Overture. Five sides, and **Sibelius:** *Swan White Suite*—Maiden with the Roses (Op. 54). Boston Symphony Orchestra directed by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs (V-14353 to V-14355) in album. Victor Set M-347. \$3.50.

## CHAMBER MUSIC



**Beethoven:** *Trio No. 7 in B flat major, Op. 97.* (Archduke.) Arthur Rubinstein (piano), Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Feuermann (viola-cello). 5-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-949. \$5.50.

**Beethoven:** *Quartet No. 7 in F major, Op. 59, No. 1.* (Rasoumovsky No. 1.) Eleven sides, and **Haydn:** *Quartet No. 83 in B flat major, Op. 103—Menuetto ma non troppo.* The Busch Quartet. 6-12" discs (C-71474D to C-71479D) in album. Columbia Set M-543. \$6.50.

**Beethoven:** *Quartet No. 12 in E flat, Op. 127.* Budapest Quartet. 5-12" discs (C-71453D to C-71457D) in album. Columbia Set M-537. \$5.50.

**Brahms:** *Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 120, No. 1.* Samuel Lifshey (viola) and Egon Petri (piano). Five sides, and **Bach**—trans. Lifshey: *Gavottes Numbers 1 and 2* (from the Suite No. 6 in D major for unaccompanied 'cello). Samuel Lifshey (viola). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-487. \$3.50.

**Debussy:** *Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano.* Three sides, and **Fauré:** *Apres un Rêve.* Mischa Elman (violin) and Leopold Mittman (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Victor Set DM-938. \$2.50.



# Christmas Gift Suggestions

**Mozart:** Serenade No. 11 in E flat major, K.375 (for 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 horns, 2 bassoons). Members of the Alumni Orchestra of the National Orchestral Association conducted by Richard Korn. 3-12" discs (V-18171 to V-18173) in album. Victor Set M-826. \$3.50.

**Schumann:** Quintet in E flat major, Op. 44. Rudolph Serkin (piano) and the Busch Quartet. 4-12" discs (V-71442D to C-71445D) in album. Columbia Set M-533. \$4.50.

**Telemann:** Don Quichotte Suite. The Arthur Fiedler Sinfonietta conducted by Arthur Fiedler with Erwin Bodky (harpsichord). 2-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-945. \$2.50.

## OPERA



**Moussorgsky:** Boris Godounov—Excerpts. Ezio Pinza (bass) with Chorus of the Metropolitan Opera and orchestra conducted by Emil Cooper. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-563. \$5.50.

**Mozart:** Le Nozze di Figaro—Ensembles. Glyndebourne Festival Opera Company conducted by Fritz Busch. 6-12" discs in album. The Mozart Opera Society, Vol. I. (Automatic sequence.) \$15.

**Wagner:** Die Walküre—Act III (complete). Helen Traubel (soprano) and Herbert Janssen (baritone) with vocal ensemble of the Metropolitan Opera and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 8-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-581. \$8.50.

## CONCERTO



**Mendelssohn:** Concerto in E minor, Op. 64. Nathan Milstein (violin) with Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. Seven sides, and **Mendelssohn:** Midsummer Night's Dream—Scherzo. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-577. \$4.50.

**Schumann:** Concerto in A minor, Op. 54. Claudio Arrau (piano) with Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Karl Krueger. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1009. \$4.50.

**Shostakovich:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 35. Eileen Joyce (piano) with Arthur Lockwood (trumpet) and the Hallé Orchestra conducted by Leslie Heward. Five sides, and **Scriabin:** Prelude in E major, Op. 11, No. 9 and **Scriabin:** Prelude in C sharp minor, Op. 11, No. 10. Eileen Joyce (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-527. \$3.50.

## MISCELLANEOUS



**Rodgers:** Carousel (Selections from the Theatre Guild musical play). Members of the Original New York Production with Carousel Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Joseph Littau. 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-400. \$5.50.

**Joseph Szigeti in Gypsy Melodies.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) with piano accompaniments by Andor Földes. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-513. \$2.75.

## CHILDREN'S RECORDS

**Prokofieff:** Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67 (Orchestral Fairy Tale). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. Narrator: Richard Hale. 3-12" discs (V-15442 to V-15444) in album. Victor Set M-566. \$3.50.

**Cinderella**—Poem by Alice Duer Miller. Edna Best and supporting cast with musical score composed and directed by Victor Young. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-391. \$2.75.

**Dickens:** Mr. Pickwick's Christmas. Charles Laughton (reader) with original musical accompaniment composed and conducted by Hanns Eisler. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-379. \$2.50.

**The Little Angel.** Loretta Young (narrator) with the Ken Darby Choir and orchestra conducted by Victor Young. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-399. \$2.75.

**Robin Hood.** Basil Rathbone and supporting cast with Chorus and Brass Choir. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-583. \$4.50.

**Treasure Island.** Basil Rathbone and supporting cast. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-553. \$3.50.



## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

*Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death.* By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

*The Musical Scene.* By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

*Evenings With Music.* By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

*Adventures in Symphonic Music.* By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

*Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann.* By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv, 574 pp. Illustrated. Henry Holt & Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.

*This Modern Music.* By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

*The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.* George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

*The History of Music in Performance.* Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FFM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keystone Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiokunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

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# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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*Bad Boy of Music.* By George Antheil. 378 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.

George Antheil calls himself "The Bad Boy of Music." We wouldn't say that he was a bad boy but he certainly has had a checkered career. His boyhood was spent in Trenton, N. J., ten years of his young manhood in Europe, mostly in Germany and France, and now he is living with his wife and family in California. Along the way he has been a student at the Curtis Institute, a concert pianist, a contributor of articles to *Esquire*, a conductor of a column for the lovelorn, a radio news commentator, the author of *The Shape of the War to Come* (Longmans, Green), published anonymously in 1940, which contained a number of prophesies, many of which have come true, and during all of his life he has from time to time composed much music, some of it pretty wild and some of unquestioned worth. His *Fourth Symphony* was introduced to the world by Stokowski and the NBC Symphony Orchestra over a coast-to-coast broadcast in February 1944. He has just completed his Fifth. George is probably best known in America for the performance of his *Ballet Mécanique* at Carnegie Hall on April 10, 1927. Three thousand persons witnessed the performance and few of them will ever forget the aeroplane propeller that actually revolved and the great curtain representing a 1927 jazz-crazy America. Visually the concert was a hilarious success but musically it was a dud. Very likely George had this exotic performance in mind when he termed himself "The Bad Boy of Music."

Throughout his life Antheil has had the faculty of meeting persons of importance in

both the musical and literary world, and his prodigious memory has made it possible for him to include in his autobiography an endless chain of interesting and amusing anecdotes. As one reads along he meets on nearly every page some outstanding personality—Ernest Block, Béla Bartók, Stravinsky, James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, Stokowski, Dali, Hedy Lamarr—just to mention a few.

For those who are interested in the musical scene since the end of World War I, this book will make lively and interesting reading. It is the sort of a book that one picks up and just keeps reading along until he comes to the end. It is in no way a profound work but it is certainly never dull. We don't agree with many of George's opinions. For instance, he seems to think that all of the conductors that have performed his works rate with the very best now living. He mentions a couple in glowing terms that in our opinion are definitely second-rate. However, his opinions are not of prime importance; it is the gay and colorful stories that he tells of his friends and himself that make this book what it is. We spent several very pleasant hours with it while we were laid up with the flu; it seemed to have quite a therapeutic value for we were up and around the next day as good as new.

\* \* \*

Columbia announced that it would not issue any new records during January, but would devote its manufacturing facilities to producing a number of older records that have not been available for many months. It states that its February list will be quite an impressive one and that a recording of Mahler's *Symphony No. 4 in G major* by the Philharmonic-Sym-

phony of New York conducted by Bruno Walter will be the feature album. We venture the guess that many record collectors will be looking forward to the release of this important item with more than usual interest.

\* \* \*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices exclusive of excise tax. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

## ORCHESTRA



Rachmaninoff: *Isle of the Dead*, Op. 29. Five sides, and Rachmaninoff: *Vocalise*, Op. 34, No. 14. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1024. \$3.50.

This magnificent version of Rachmaninoff's *Isle of the Dead* is one of the most thoroughly satisfying recordings of recent years. We bespeak for it the consideration of all discerning music lovers. Congratulations to Koussevitzky and the great Boston Symphony Orchestra!

Of Rachmaninoff's several compositions for orchestra, *Isle of the Dead* is certainly one of the most eloquent. It is well made, and it has something to say. It bears the sub-title: "To the Picture by A. Böcklin." A reproduction of Böcklin's memorable painting very appropriately appears on the cover of the present album.

Lawrence Gilman, in what is perhaps the most illuminating description of this music that has yet been written, has said:

"Rachmaninoff projects for us the unruffled sea, the solemn approach of the barge with its quiet passengers, the forbidding and timeless haven which it nears—the monotonous wave-like figure in 5-8 time for harp and muted 'cellos, *divisi*, which continues so persistently throughout the opening section of the tone-poem, exerts a strange and oppressive power. But he has not been content with evoking unearthly and disquieting apparitions; he has given us the emotional implications, the human background of the picture. He discerns its mortal complement. He remembers the grief, the lamentations, the loneliness of those who are still of this world—who have not yet taken passage upon that uncharted sea with that unhastening ferryman: he remembers 'the measureless waters of human tears.' And in that passage where the *Dias Irae* is suggested by the 'cellos, under a descending chromatic wail in the violins (the most affecting page, as it seems to us, that Rachmaninoff has composed), he achieves not only a faithful commentary upon the picture, but an amplification of its idea. He has enlarged upon its text, though he

has told us nothing which was not contained in it. He has said more than Böcklin has said, but nothing that Böcklin did not imply. His subject gave him neither opportunity nor excuse for saving anything in a different key. Böcklin's vision is a fundamentally despondent, a fundamentally unilluminated one. The musician could not justifiably impose a different hue upon it. There is no elevation in the music; but there is none in the picture."

*Isle of the Dead* was first played at Moscow in the season of 1908-09 under the direction of the composer. The first performance in the United States was at Chicago, December 3, 1909, by the Theodore Thomas Orchestra conducted by Rachmaninoff. (In the notes that appear on the inside cover of this album it is stated that the first American performance was given by the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Our information is that the performance in Boston occurred on December 17, two weeks after the Chicago premier.) The work is dedicated to Nicolas von Struve.

The first, and only other recording of this work was made by the Philadelphia Orchestra with the composer conducting, and was released in September 1930. It was an outstanding recording in its day, but it is now overshadowed by this superb modern version by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony. R.

Bernstein: "Jeremiah" Symphony. St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. Solo by Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano). 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1026. \$3.50.

Seldom does one hear a youthful work written with such purpose and assurance as the *Jeremiah* Symphony. Leonard Bernstein, though only 24 when he actually began the first movement of this symphony, seemed to know just where he wanted to go, musically speaking, and, furthermore, just how to get there. The result is that on first playing of this album, one is astonished to find a work which is entirely mature, profound and quite unlike any other music one is likely to hear. It has an age-old mellow ness; the deep-rooted tribulations of an old and tried race are present.

Small wonder that the *Jeremiah* won for its composer the 1944 Music Critics Circle of New York award for being "the most outstanding orchestral work by an American composer introduced during the 1943-44 season."

The symphony was finished on December 31, 1942, and was dedicated by the composer to his father. Mr. Bernstein says of his work, *The symphony does not make use to any great extent of actual Hebrew thematic material. The first phrase of the scherzo is paraphrased from an original Hebrew chant, and the opening phrase of the vocal part of the Lamentation is based on a liturgical cadence still sung today in commemoration of the destruction of Jerusalem by*

Babylon. . . . As for programmatic meanings, the intention again is not one of literalness but of emotional quality.

Victor has been right on the spot when it comes to recording this representative modern American work. It has engaged the composer to lead the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra in his own creation, and it has turned up with Nan Merriman, American mezzo-soprano, for the long solo passage which is sung in Hebrew. Miss Merriman sounds decidedly impressive.

The recording is a fine job, but the surfaces of the copy we had at our disposal were poor.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Milhaud: Protée—Symphonic Suite No. 2.** San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1027. \$3.50.

Victor seems to have taken a truly pioneer attitude this month, for plus the *Jeremiah Symphony* of Leonard Bernstein, it has also come forward with Darius Milhaud's unrecorded *Protée, Symphonic Suite No. 2*. Quite appropriately, it is Pierre Monteux and his San Francisco Symphony Orchestra who are the performers of a composition which already is assuming the trappings and labels of a *period-piece*.

Milhaud's *Protée Suite* is an excellent example of the music that burst upon an astonished world after the first World War. The composer was a respected and valued member of the Six, that group of young Parisian composers, who after the last war sought to open up new thoroughfares in music.

The *Protée Suite* was first performed in Paris on October 24, 1920, at one of the *Concerts Colonne*, and was conducted by Gabriel Pierné. Originally, it had been composed as incidental music for a satiric play by Paul Claudel, which bore the same name. Piere Monteux had the honor of introducing the *Suite* to this country when he played it at a concert of the Boston Symphony, in Boston, on April 22, 1921, so that his presence in the album at hand has a slightly historic aura about it.

The music is brilliant, assured, satiric. The *Suite* opens with an *Overture*, which features a tango-habanera rhythm. Immediately following is a brilliant *Prelude and Fugue* (perhaps the most spontaneous and original section of the *Suite*). We then have a *Pastorale* and a *Nocturne*, two pieces which are filled with ironic implications, and finally and appropriately, a *Finale*, which is a bright, strong climax to the *Suite*.

Pierre Monteux is a past master at this sort of thing; there is no one better. The recording is loud and brilliant, which seems to suit the composition.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Haydn: Symphony No. 98, in B flat.** Seven sides, and **Mendelssohn: Scherzo** (from Octet in E flat, Op. 20). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1025. \$4.50.

In the summer of 1939 Columbia released the first recording of this lovely Haydn symphony, played by the CBS Orchestra under the direction of Howard Barlow. It was greeted with considerable enthusiasm by a majority of discerning record collectors. It has enjoyed a reasonable popularity through the years. Now we have this outstanding recording by the NBC Symphony under the brilliant direction of Arturo Toscanini. Certainly this album should not be passed by without a hearing by any true lover of symphonic music.

Although this is not one of Haydn's better known symphonies, it is one that can be readily appreciated and enjoyed. It was first performed at the third of Salomon's concerts in London in 1791, and it is reported to have met with immediate and enthusiastic success. Haydn conducted from the harpsichord and Salomon was the concertmaster. The first and last movements called for encores, which were given—musicians in those days were more liberal than they are now, or were the audiences in no hurry to get somewhere else, as they are today. Today, if you are not quick on your feet at the end of a program your neighbor is.

The little Mendelssohn selection that fills the odd side of this set is indeed a very pleasing bit of tuneful and lively music. All in all this is an album that merits high praise.

R.

**Ravel: Bolero.** Three sides, and **Massenet: Thaïs—Meditation.** Robin Hood Dell Orchestra conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-257. \$2.50.

The prime interest in this album is the fact that it contains the first recording of the famous Robin Hood Dell Orchestra. This orchestra, which plays in Fairmount Park in Philadelphia during the summer season, is made up principally of members of the world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra, whose numerous recordings are known to every record collector. It was rumored last summer that this orchestra had made a number of recordings and so we have been anxiously awaiting their release.

Why another recording of Ravel's *Bolero*, when there are at least two excellent ones already available, we wouldn't know. The Philadelphians do a good job, but why subject them to the very stiff competition of the Boston Symphony and the Boston "Pops" on their first release? We have been more or less associated with the record industry for over a quarter of a century, but we frankly admit we don't know the answer to this one.

As far as we are concerned the thing that attracted us most was the filler for the fourth side of this pair

of discs. Kostelanetz and the Orchestra do a really very nice job with the ever-popular "Meditation." If you don't have the *Bolero* in your library and would like to add it to your collection, you will kill two birds with one stone by selecting this album—you will have a satisfactory rendition of it and you will have the first recording to be released of the very fine Robin Hood Dell Orchestra. R.

**Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46.** Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 2-12" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-10. \$2.25.

In December 1940, when Columbia released its recording of this suite by Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, we said: "This recording is probably a recording to end all recordings of the tremendously popular Peer Gynt Suite No. 1—at least for sometime to come." Five years have now passed and the "sometime to come" has arrived. Victor presents a new version by the Cincinnati Symphony conducted by Eugene Goossens. For our money we'll still take the Beecham older recording, but that's a personal preference—we just don't think anyone can beat Sir Thomas in light, graceful music of this character.

There are two Peer Gynt Suites. The present one is the more popular containing: *Morning*; *The Death of Ase*; *Anitra's Dance*; and *In the Hall of the Mountain King*.

**Strauss: Roses from the South—Waltz, Op. 388.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-8986). \$1.

Here is a record that is a "natural." A Strauss waltz played by the famous Boston "Pops." Reserve place for this one on the best sellers' list. Thrillingly played and flawlessly recorded.

## CHAMBER MUSIC



**Debussy: Danses (1904).** 1) *Danse sacrée*. 2) *Danse profane*. Marcel Grandjany (harp) with Victor String Orchestra conducted by Sylvan Levin. Three sides, and **Ravel: Introduction and Allegro (1905)**. Marcel Grandjany (harp) with Victor Chamber Orchestra conducted by Sylvan Levin. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1021. \$3.50.

This album serves as an introduction on Victor records of the fine French harpist, Marcel Grandjany. Mr. Grandjany is one of the world's virtuosos on this charming and ever poetic instrument.

Works by the two greatest French composers of the early twentieth century—Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel—have been appropriately selected for Mr. Grandjany's debut. Especially appealing is the Ravel *Introduction and Allegro*, which employs the harp in such a nostalgic and romantic fashion. There are two recordings of this selection already in

present-day catalogs—by Lily Laskine and the Calvert Quartet (V-4509-10), and by L. Newell and the Stuyvesant String Quartet (Columbia Set X-167). Both of these will have to bow to this latest and more modern recording.

Monsieur Grandjany is accompanied by the Victor String Orchestra with Sylvan Levin, conducting. The balance between harp and orchestra could not be improved upon, and the recording is in every way what one has a right to expect today.

The Debussy selection is the classic dances, so characteristic of the composer's Grecian vein—*Danses Sacrees et Profanes*. A new recording of these Debussy pieces was badly needed as the only one available was one made by Stokowski over 15 years ago with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Here again Mr. Grandjany reveals himself as a first-class interpreter of the music of his countrymen; the results are unusually satisfactory from both an interpretive and recording standpoint. We might note that quieter record surfaces would have added to our enjoyment of such delicate stuff as these pieces are made of.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.



## OPERA

**Borodin: Prince Igor**—Excerpts. Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Moscow State Theatre (Bolshoi) of the USSR. Sung in Russian and recorded in the USSR. 5-12" discs in album. Asch Set 800. \$12.50.

ASCH, a recording company which is putting out some interesting records, releases excerpts from Borodin's *Prince Igor* this month.

Though pressed on the popular new vynalite surfaces, these discs, recorded in Soviet Russia apparently during the war, leave a good deal to be desired as far as reproduction goes. This is a pity for excerpts from Borodin's opera recorded in the country which gave birth to its composer should be a very interesting undertaking.

*Prince Igor* is not too well known in America, though it was given at the Metropolitan on December 30, 1915, under the direction of Polacco, with Frances Alda, Flora Perini, Luca Botta, Pasquale Amato and Adamo Didur in the principal roles.

The present album features artists, chorus and orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre of the USSR. If this is a sample of the best operatic voices to be found in the Soviet Union today, we must confess we are not overly impressed. The duet between Yaroslava and Vladimir; Kontchak's Air sung by a ponderous basso, M. Mikhailov; Choir of Polovetsky Girls with a vibrant soloist—E. Antonova, dramatic soprano, and the Poloventsy dances and choruses, make up the contents of the set. Interesting; but marred by booming and generally inferior recording. D.

**VOCAL**

**Brahms: Alto Rhapsody, Op. 53.** Marian Anderson (contralto) with San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and Municipal Chorus conducted by Pierre Monteux. 2-12" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-13. \$2.25.

Apparently Marian Anderson or someone at Victor was not satisfied with the much-praised version of Brahms' *Alto Rhapsody* made by this same vocalist not so long ago in conjunction with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Here it crops up again with Miss Anderson, but this time she is associated with Pierre Monteux, the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and the Municipal Chorus.

The present set is in every way a fine one. Perhaps it is a little mellower and more carefully recorded than the older one. As far as Miss Anderson goes, we could see no difference in her cool, detached singing of Brahms' music from what she accomplished in the earlier version. One might say that this was a carbon copy of her first recording. Miss Anderson again seems singularly endowed for the *Alto Rhapsody*; it is the type of music which sets her off to the very best possible advantage.

The delightful feature of this set is Mr. Monteux' completely poised, mature and dignified comprehension of Brahms' score. One has the feeling that this conductor has the wisdom and the experience to project just such a noble performance as we hear from these four record surfaces. The recording is excellent and the dynamics are well controlled at all moments.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Polonaise—Selections.** Earl Wrightson (baritone), Rose Inghram (soprano), Mary Martha Briney (soprano) and chorus with Al Goodman and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Victor Set P-145. \$2.50.

Many persons will be glad to know that an album of selections from the big New York musical play "Polonaise" is now available. The music for this smash hit is based upon Chopin and was adapted by Bronislaw Kaper. The very excellent lyrics are by John Latouche, famous for his *Ballad for Americans*.

Al Goodman has done a fine job in presenting these selections and the talented vocalists render their numbers in a highly satisfactory manner. This album starts with a spirited orchestral arrangement of the famous "Polonaise" and the more important selections follow in the order in which they appear in the play. The final side is devoted to a thrilling rendition of the *Finale*.

Especially fine are Earl Wrightson's singing of *O Heart of My Country*, Rose Inghram's *The Next Time I Care*, Mary Martha Briney's *I Wonder as I Wander*, and Mr. Wrightson's and Miss Briney's duets *Just for Tonight* and *Now I Know Your Face*

by Heart. All in all this is a bang-up recording, and the problem for the dealers will be to have enough copies in stock to meet the demand, which should be terrific. The story of the play is given briefly on the inside cover of the album.

**Catholic Hymns.** Patrick Gainer (tenor) with organ accompaniment. 3-10" discs (NCS-1066, NCS-1068 and NCS-1070). \$1 each.

NCS-1066 *Give Me Thy Heart.*  
*Dear Angel Ever at My Side.*  
*Thee Will I Love My Dearest Treasure.*  
*Hail Heavenly Queen.*

NCS-1068 *Sweet Heart of Jesus.*  
*Mother Dear Oh Pray for Me.*  
*To Jesus Heart All Burning.*  
*Dear Guardian of Mary.*

NCS-1070 *Veni, Jesu, Amor mi.*  
*Oh Food That Weary Pilgrims Love.*  
*I Dwell a Captive in This Heart.*  
*Sing My Tongue the Saviour's Glory.*

There is a great dearth of Catholic Hymns on records. To correct this, the National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists have released these three discs. Each disc contains four hymns—two on each side. The well-known tenor, Patrick Gainer, who is featured on the Sacred Heart Program over the air, was chosen to make the recordings, which were made with appropriate organ accompaniments. Mr. Gainer's voice is suitable for the task and his diction is such that every word of each hymn is easily understood—this is important because these are hymns known to every devout Catholic, and the text of each is just as important, perhaps much more important, than the tunes. It is the sentiment of these hymns that counts—the tunes are only vehicles on which the meaningful words ride.

The quality of the recording is only fair and the surfaces are none too smooth, but those persons who have been hungry for some of these good old Catholic hymns will doubtless not be too critical.

**Songs of Love.** Frank Connors (tenor) with orchestral accompaniments. 4-10" discs in album. Sonora Set MS-472. \$2.50.

Frank Connors started his career at the Roxy Theater in New York; from there he went to the Fox Theater in Detroit, where he was a featured soloist for six years. More recently he has been singing on two NBC programs—"Songs by Frank Connors" and "Finder's Keepers." At present he is in the armed forces but expects to return to his musical career very shortly. Frankie has a pleasing tenor voice and realizes the importance of making the words of the familiar songs he sings easily understood. We don't believe that he pretends to be a great singer but he is just the sort of singer that the great masses of the people can and do enjoy. His renditions are straightforward and honest and do not attempt to be anything

more than they are—pleasing versions of well-beloved ballads for all to enjoy.

The selections in the present albums are: *Oh! Promise Me; I Love You Truly; Love's Old Sweet Song; A Little Love, A Little Kiss; At Dawning; Silver Threads Among the Gold; Love, Here Is My Heart; and When I Grow Too Old to Dream.*

**The Harvey Girls**—Selections. Judy Garland, Kenny Baker and Virginia O'Brien with orchestra and chorus conducted by Lennie Hayton. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-388. \$2.75.

Decca offers six songs from the M-G-M picture "The Harvey Girls," featuring the stars of that very successful movie—Judy Garland, Kenny Baker, Virginia O'Brien. The soloists are ably assisted by an adequate chorus and orchestra in these very pleasing melodies. Nothing to get excited about, but popular music of the better grade nicely presented and well recorded. The selections are: *On the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé; In the Valley; Wait and See; Swing Your Partner Round and Round; It's a Great Big World; and The Wild, Wild West.*

**Going My Way**—Selections. Bing Crosby with Williams Brothers Quartet, John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra, and Orchestra and Choir conducted by Victor Young. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-405. \$2.

It's too bad that Decca did not have this album when *Going My Way* was the biggest hit in current movies. However, the public generally never seems to get enough of Crosby recordings and the tens of thousands of persons who saw the picture will very likely wish to bring back some very pleasant memories of a delightful evening at the movies, and so there is no question but that this album will enjoy a wide and large sale. Four of the selections have been issued before on single records. They are: *Going My Way; Swinging on a Star; Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral; and The Day After Forever.* The two new selections are: *Ave Maria and Home Sweet Home.* Crosby fans should see their dealer without delay. This is an item in the "Sorry! We have no more left" class.

**Kálmán: Play Gypsies-Dance Gypsies.** One side, and **Malotte: Song of the Open Road.** Igor Gorin (baritone) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1179). 75c.

Mr. Gorin's many fans will probably welcome this record warmly. Two good manly songs that suit this artist to a tee. Well sung and faithfully recorded.

**Purcell: I Attempt From Love's Sickness to Fly.** One side, and **Handel: Siciliana** (*Let Me Wander, Not Unseen*). Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) with Victor String Orchestra conducted by Macklin Marrow. 1-10" disc (V-10-1178). 75c.

Both of these little songs are over two hundred years old. The fact that they have retained some

popularity for so many years indicates that they have real merit. The Purcell selection is particularly fascinating. Miss Thebom sings both of them in excellent taste and resists any urge she may have to make them overly dramatic. They are simple little ballads of another age, and Miss Thebom so treats them, and thus presents them with telling effect.

## PIANO



**Rossini**—arr. Kovacs: *Barbiere di Siviglia*—Largo al factotum. One side, and **Kreisler**—arr. Luboshutz: *Tambourin Chinois.* Pierre Luboshutz and Genia Nemenoff (two pianos). 1-12" disc (V-11-8987). \$1.

Here's a pair of tricky novelties for two pianos. Both are bound to make your heart beat a bit faster, and the "Largo" will certainly provoke a smile or two. The skill with which they are played is nothing short of amazing. A thrilling disc for those who like this sort of thing. Splendidly recorded.

**Liszt: Mefisto Waltz.** Three sides, and **Albéniz: Evocación** (from *Iberia: Suite*). William Kapell (piano). 2-12" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-11. \$2.25.

The brilliant young player, William Kapell, gives an exhibition of pianistic pyrotechnics that is out and beyond anything that we have heard in many a long year, in his version of the Liszt *Mefisto Waltz.* It holds one breathless from start to finish. It is hard to realize that one man with but ten fingers plays all the notes that we hear on these discs. Kapell does not miss a trick in making this showy music as spectacular as possible. The piano reproduction is of the best.

## VIOLIN



**Prokofieff**—arr. Grunes: *Peter and the Wolf.* One side, and **Paganini**—arr. Kochanski: *La Campanella* (Rondo from Second Concerto, Op. 7). Ricardo Odnoposoff (violin) with piano accompaniments by Valentin Pavlovsky. 1-12" disc (V-11-8849). \$1.

*La Campanella* is for those who like violin pyrotechnics by a capable artist. The *Peter and the Wolf* arrangement is a pure novelty that you either like or you don't. It left us rather cold, but several persons we played it for seemed to think it very clever. Better listen to this disc before you buy it.

**Jascha Heifetz**—Violin Solos. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniment by Milton Kaye. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set 385. \$3.50.

Decca is certainly following its policy of giving the public the music that it likes by the best available artists when it issues this pleasing album. There isn't much that one can say about this group of records except to list the selections and to say that Heifetz plays them to suitable accompaniments supplied by Milton Kaye. The selections are Dvorák's *Humoreske*; Ravel's *Habanera*; Jamaican Rumba; Godowski's *Viennese*; Samuel Gardner's *From the Canebrake*; Debussy's *Beau soir*; *Deep River*; and *Levee Dance*.

## CHORAL



**Hindemith: Six Chansons.** Victor Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw. 1-12" disc (V-11-8868). \$1.

Hindemith was fascinated by the poetry of Rainer Maria Rilka and has set six of this poet's short pieces to music. The English versions of these poems used in this recording are by Elaine de Sincay. The selections are: *The Doe*; *A Swan*; *Since All Is Passing*; *Springtime*; *In Winter*; and *Orchard*. The very able choral conductor, Robert Shaw, and the excellent Victor Chorale give impeccable performances of these unique little choral numbers. This is definitely music for the connoisseur. One must have a fine appreciation of modern choral music at its best to appreciate these delicate and ethereal little pieces. Even the highly discerning will have to play them several times before they can begin to appreciate the real beauty of Mr. Hindemith's music. They have been artistically sung and splendidly recorded.

## CHILDREN



**Grant: What Is God Like?** One side, and **Grant: The Song of Growing Things.** Karolyn Harris (vocalist and narrator) with piano accompaniments by Allan Grant. 1-10" disc in folder. Bluebird Set Y-10. 60c.

Really nice records for little children are rather hard to find. We came across this the other day and could not resist mentioning it in this bulletin. Allan Grant has set two poems by Olive Volkmar to music that really is quite fascinating, and Karolyn Harris introduces them with a little story and then sings them in a most pleasing manner. Each word can easily be understood. Victor has placed this disc in an attractive folder with pictures in full color. A copy of each of Miss Volkmar's poems is printed on the inside. One may follow the words as Miss Harris sings them. Here is a record that one may present to any little child with the confidence that it will not only be enjoyable but also be in the best of taste.

R.

**The Selfish Giant**—An Oscar Wilde Fairy Tale. Fredric March (narrator) and supporting cast. Original musical score composed and directed by Lehman Engel. 2-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-389. \$2.

Another in Decca's growing list of albums for children, and a very attractive one! No effort has been spared to produce this story in a way that children will love and enjoy. The musical score provided by Lehman Engel is very fine, the sound effects fit in nicely with the story, the pleasing choir adds just the proper touch to the finale—all is in excellent taste. The noted actor Fredric March keeps everything within bounds and his fine diction is a joy to listen to.



## ORGAN

**Hymns for Children.** Played on the Master Cathedral Organ. 3-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set H. \$3.50.

This little album contains organ accompaniments for six hymns for children. We presume they are for use in the home or in small Sunday Schools where an organist is not available. Certainly no one would want to just listen to the same tune being played over three or four times, depending on the number of verses in the hymn. A hymnal containing both the words and the music is included with this album.

The names of the hymns are: *Jesus Loves Me*; *When He Cometh*; *Jesus Loves Even Me*; *Stand Up for Jesus*; *Can a Little Child Like Me*; and *There Is a Happy Land*.



## MISCELLANEOUS

**The Liberation of Paris.** Recordings made on the spot during the liberation of Paris, August, 1944. English commentary by Orson Wells and Emlen Etting. 3-12" discs in album. Asch Set 50. \$5.

This album might well be called a souvenir of the liberation of Paris. Authentic recordings made on the spot are interspersed with comments in English by Orson Wells and Emlen Etting. Mr. Etting was the first American reporter to arrive in Paris in August, 1944. Parts of speeches by Generals Eisenhower and De Gaulle are heard over the noise of the crowds on the boulevards. The famous resistance song is sung by Germaine Sablon, sister of the famous Jean Sablon. These are just a few of the highlights of the many vivid and thrilling scenes that have been captured on these discs.

This recording was conceived and edited by Pierre Schaeffer, acting chief of the Paris Underground Radio Station at the time of liberation. Here is an authentic historic document in recorded form.



## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

*The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents.* Edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel. Illustrated. 431 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$6.

*Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death.* By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

*The Musical Scene.* By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

*Evenings With Music.* By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

*Adventures in Symphonic Music.* By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

*Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann.* By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv, 574 pp. Illustrated. Henry Holt & Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.

*This Modern Music.* By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

*The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.* George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

**NOTE:** All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Margall, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiokunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

# The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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WITH this issue, the thirteenth volume of THE NEW RECORDS is completed, and it finds the record industry gradually adjusting itself to normal conditions after four years of the most trying times in its history. All in all, we do not think that the industry as a whole did so badly considering the obstacles it had to meet, and the fact that it could not claim to be a necessary business during wartime. There is no question but that the interest in recorded music grew during those exciting years, and at the present moment there are probably more persons interested in recordings than ever before in the history of the industry. This is reflected in our subscription list. We have more subscribers today than at any time during our thirteen years of publication. Our readers are in no way limited to those persons who purchase records from us. As a matter of fact, we do not believe that twenty per cent of our subscribers are customers. Anyone is welcome to subscribe by simply sending in the small subscription fee (50 cents per year).

During the last year we have been able to review a few imported records but they were received in small lots at irregular intervals. From the word that we have from abroad, it would seem that from now on we should receive regular shipments from Europe and that we should be able to cover some important foreign recordings in each of our future issues. These reviews have always been of prime importance to our readers and we are certainly pleased to be able to pass this good news along.

A great many subscriptions end with this issue—if yours does, please return the enclosed blank promptly in order that you may not miss any issues. If you have already renewed your

subscription or if it does not end with this issue, please disregard the renewal blank enclosed.

During the last few months, we have heard from a number of our former readers who have returned to civilian life. It seems that one of the first things that they wish to do is to check up on the recordings that have been made available while they were away. Requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS have been numerous.

It would seem from the number of these requests that a great many of our readers are keeping a complete file of these little bulletins. Such a file would contain a listing and review of all of the classical recordings that have been released in America during the last thirteen years, or to be exact since March 1933, and in addition most of the important foreign recordings.

It occurs to us that some of our new readers, or those of our older readers who did not save their copies, might like to have such a file, while back copies are still available. The present issue is the 156th and all except fifteen numbers are available. The missing numbers are all prior to 1941. We shall be glad to send the 151 available issues to any address postpaid upon receipt of five dollars. Single copies may be had at 5c each or a complete volume of twelve issues for 50c. Each volume began with the March issues.

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

## ORCHESTRA



**Mahler: Symphony No. 4 in G major.** Philharmonic-Symphony of New York conducted by Bruno Walter with Desi Halban (soprano). 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-589. \$6.50.

It is indeed a pleasure to receive this first recording (at least, domestic recording) of Gustav Mahler's beautiful *Symphony No. 4 in G Major*. The symphony has been played with great success this season by Bruno Walter and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and here we have Mr. Walter combined with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York.

It is through the efforts of such devoted followers of Mahler as Bruno Walter, Dimitri Mitropoulos and others that the music of this much neglected master is enjoying a decided revival, a revival which seems to contain some of the seeds of permanency in it.

Mr. Walter says: *It gives me great satisfaction to present Mahler's Fourth Symphony in the permanent form of these records to the every-growing community of the friends of his art. I want to express my high appreciation of the Columbia Recording Corporation's pioneering spirit which enabled me to serve in this way a cause so near to my heart; and I feel certain that the records of this symphony will help to deepen the love of Mahler's music and to spread the lofty message it carries.*

There is often a morning-sky freshness about Mahler's music. We hear this in the first movement of his First Symphony, and here again we come across it in the first movement of the present album, which depicts the lovely landscape of the environs of Vienna. In Mahler's music we feel at various times a kinship with the music of Beethoven, of Brahms, and of Richard Strauss, and the link between these masters is undoubtedly the fact that they all were, at one time or another, influenced by that city of remembered enchantments.

The second movement was influenced by Mahler's familiarity with Arnold Boecklin's self-portrait, in which we find Death fiddling in his ear.

The third movement transports us to realms of serene and heavenly pleasure, of a bliss such as one finds in the scene of the Elysian Fields in Gluck's *Orfeo*. This, a long and particularly lovely stretch of music, contains a sense of relaxation and well-being, within which we might well like to take refuge from a world grown chaotic. This is music which is both profound and beautifully and fastidiously fashioned, and which will probably endear the *Fourth Symphony* more than any other element to him who is hearing it for the first time.

The fourth section is like a quattrocento figure on a gold base; music which suggests stiff figures of mystical angels with transfigured faces. In it occurs a vocal solo of considerable length, a solo of silver purity. This is sung, as it has been in all the recent

actual performances of Mahler's work, by the young and gifted soprano Desi Halban.

Personally, we are among those who have always embraced the Cause of Mahler's music, and therefore, we are doubly glad that this truly beautiful work has been placed on records and given such a definitive and loving performance by Mr. Walter and his men.

And with Mr. Walter we say "Bravo Columbia, for your fine pioneering spirit!"

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Tchaikovsky: The Swan Lake, Op. 20.** St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 5-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1028. \$5.75.

With the tremendous acclaim which ballet is enjoying all over America at the moment, Victor's new and elaborate album, presenting Tchaikovsky's classic ballet, *Swan Lake*, on ten record-sides, will undoubtedly prove very popular with most music lovers. The artists engaged to perform this work are Vladimir Golschmann and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Both conductor and orchestra seem well disposed and temperamentally suited to the work they have undertaken.

Presented in an elaborate album, with an attractive cover and many pages and photographs devoted to detailed descriptions of Tschaikovsky's ballet, the set becomes immediately alluring. There are reproductions of famous ballerinas and premier danseurs scattered throughout these preliminary pages, as well as much material which will prove interesting to the ballometane and to the ordinary follower of music. The album will undoubtedly also prove a souvenir of many delightful evenings when *Swan Lake* was on the program, to followers of the ballet.

For our taste there is too much material. Playing the album through at one sitting, finally proved tedious and failed to hold our attention after the sixth record-side. The music is not quite substantial enough to be able to sustain our interest for 37 minutes (which is the time it takes to play the set), and we also regret that Mr. Golschmann did not see fit to begin his recording with the mysterious theme which one associates above all else with this ballet, and which does occur at its beginning. Instead, for some reason difficult to fathom, the conductor has selected the introduction of the second act for his first record-side, a procedure which seems particularly illogical to us.

In the album we come across the various dances of the swans, as well as the *Voyage of the Swans*, the *Pas de Trois*, the *Spanish Dance*, the *Mazurka*, the *Dance of the Little Swans*, the *Invitation to a Waltz* and the *Czardas*, among others. The famous *Pas de Quatre*, which appears (also rather illogically) on record No. 5, is taken at too slow a tempo by Mr. Golschmann.

The recording of these various numbers is indeed superb. There is no other word to describe the spa-

ciousness of the acoustics or the clear-cut life-like quality of the various solo instruments.

*Swan Lake* can still be found in the catalogs by John Barbirolli and the London Symphony (V-11666, 11667) and by Dorati and the London Philharmonic Orchestra in (Columbia set M-349), but both of these performances cannot compare with the superbly vital recording of the present set.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Chopiana.** (Compositions of Chopin arranged by Dimitri Rogal-Lewitzsky). Robin Hood Dell Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-598. \$3.50.

This is the second recording to be released of the renowned Robin Hood Dell Orchestra. The first, Ravel's *Bolero* with Kostelanetz conducting, was issued last month and met with phenomenal success despite the fact that numerous other versions of *Bolero* were already available. In the present recording, the orchestra is led by its Musical Director, Dimitri Mitropoulos. The choice of *Chopiana*, a collection of Chopin pieces skillfully and interestingly arranged for orchestra by Dimitri Rogal-Lewitzsky, is an excellent one. It is timely, for there has never been a time when Chopin's music was more popular than it is today, and also the present orchestral arrangements have not been recorded before. This new item of music that is very much in vogue should introduce the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra to many thousands of music lovers all over the country, who have never had the privilege of hearing this fine Philadelphia organization. Pardon the "plug" for the home town players, but this is really a very fine orchestra and one that should have made records years ago.

There is an interesting story in connection with *Chopiniana* which is told in Mr. Affelder's notes that accompany this album. It seems that when Mitropoulos visited Russia for the first time some years ago, he met Dimitri Rogal-Lewitzsky, who was then a student composer. Lewitzsky showed him some of his work, and Mitropoulos was amazed and shocked to find the music written, not on regular manuscript sheets, but on old pieces of brown wrapping paper. There was no music paper available in Russia at the time. When Mitropoulos returned to Central Europe, he sent a large package of manuscript paper to Lewitzsky and in gratitude, the young composer sent the conductor his orchestrations of a group of Chopin pieces, which he called *Chopiniana*. Upon opening the score Mitropoulos found that the work had been dedicated to him. He has played it upon numerous occasions and always with marked success.

*Chopiniana* consists of orchestrations of the following Chopin pieces: *Etude No. 12 in C minor, Op. 10 ("Revolutionary")*; *Nocturne No. 13 in C minor, Op. 48, No. 1*; *Mazurka No. 25 in B minor, Op. 33, No. 4*; *Valse brillante No. 14 in E minor, Op. posth.*; and *Polonaise No. 6 in A flat major, Op. 53* (featured in the current movie "A Song to Remember").

R.

**McDonald: Symphonic Suite**—"My Country at War." The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-592. \$3.50.

Columbia is surely out to give the record-buying public music they do not hear every day. One cannot commend this policy too strongly. Here is this enterprising company again—this time, with Harl McDonald's *My Country at War*, performed by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

It is said that most emotional reactions to a period of great stress and turmoil such as the war we have just seen come to an end, occur sometime after that period, when one has had the proper time to digest what has happened. Maybe we are wrong, but in listening to Mr. McDonald's piece, which was composed during the early part of 1941 and during the summer and fall of 1942, we feel that the composer, in his ardor to say something of the moment, has emerged not as profoundly as he would, had he waited.

The suite is sincere, effective at times, and contains moments of dramatic power. One is never for a moment, while listening to it, under the impression that this is important or lasting stuff, though one rather hesitates to put oneself on record and say this. Nevertheless, that is the impression made on one listener, and should be accepted as such.

*My Country at War* (and what an admirable title this is!) is divided into four separate and yet connected parts: 1941, *Bataan*, *Elegy*, and *Hymn of the People*. *Bataan* seemed to us by far the most arresting of the four panels, and the 'cello solo passage of *Elegy* also creates a definite effect. We did not care too much for the final section and were disappointed when Mr. McDonald introduced the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* as a grand finale. This trick of introducing well-known patriotic songs has been done too often.

Naturally, the Philadelphia Orchestra which has played Mr. McDonald's composition, but not introduced it (It was introduced by the Indianapolis Symphony on January 8, 1944)—gives the piece a magnificent and full-blooded performance, which is admirably recorded.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Holst: The Planets Suite, Op. 32.** The B.B.C. Symphonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 7-12" discs (V-DB-6227 to V-DB-6233) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (V-DBS-8994 to V-DB-9000). \$17.50.

In February 1944 Victor issued an abridged set of *The Planets* by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Ernest MacMillan, and many years ago the suite was recorded in its entirety by the London Symphony with the composer conducting. It remained for H.M.V., under a subsidy by the British Council, to issue the definitive recording made by the

B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Sir Adrian Boult. We are very sure that most music lovers will feel that this present version is just about as near perfection as anyone could expect. We are putting this a bit strongly with the hope that all other record manufacturers will take the hint. There is certainly no need for another recording of this work.

Gustav Holst was a British composer of Swedish descent, born in 1874; his death occurred in 1934. He was much interested in unusual languages and astrology, and it was the latter hobby that inspired him to compose this beautiful suite, in which he views the seven planets of our solar system quite objectively.

*The Planets* is a thoroughly original piece of music and it has been recognized now (1946) as occupying a place of great importance in the field of modern English music. The contrasts in this score are remarkably vivid and the entire piece is permeated by a strong sense of beauty and integrity. It is music that you will thoroughly enjoy listening to. The work was composed during the years 1914-1917.

**Couperin**—arr. Milhaud: *La Sultane Suite*—Overture and Allegro. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (C-12161-D). \$1.

François Couperin, called "le grand" to distinguish him from the other members of his musical family, was a contemporary of Bach, and holds a somewhat similar place in French music to that held by Johann Sebastian in German. A number of suites that Bach entitled "French" were in the style of Couperin, whose music the great German composer admired very much.

The present arrangements of the first two movements of Couperin's *La Sultane Suite* were made by the distinguished French composer, Darius Milhaud, at the suggestion of Vladimir Golschmann, the conductor of the St. Louis Symphony. The spirit of the original has been carefully maintained and as one listens, he has the feeling that he is hearing music of another age played by a modern symphony orchestra. We often think of the great joy that it would give such masters as Bach and Couperin if they could hear their works performed as the Minneapolis Symphony plays this one under the inspired direction of Mitropoulos. Such men never knew how grand their music could sound.

**Haydn: Symphony No. 97 in C major.** (Salomon Set, No. 1). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" (V-DB-6222 to V-DB-6224) discs in album. Also available in automatic sequence (V-DB-9001 to V-DB-9003). \$7.50.

We are delighted to greet this superb new recording of one of Haydn's jolliest symphonies. The only other recorded version that we know of was made about fifteen years ago by the London Symphony conducted by Hans Weisbach.

This work is the first of a series of twelve symphonies that Haydn wrote for Johann Peter Salomon between 1791 and 1795. It was first heard at one of the Salomon Concerts in London with the composer conducting at the piano and Salomon leading the orchestra. Haydn's usual slow introduction is somewhat shorter here than in many of his symphonies, and soon after the first record begins we are bouncing ahead as gayly as could be wished. The leisurely slow movement is full of effective touches, and the lively Minuet will start the feet to beating time. The amusing Finale, a lusty Rondo, is Haydn at his best, and contains some of his most skilful and effective music. This is a work that should be heard more frequently in the concert hall.

Certainly no more suitable conductor could have been chosen for this recording than Sir Thomas. To our mind he is the most able interpreter of Haydn available today. Almost perfect reproduction makes this a set that we can recommend without any hesitancy. R.

**Glazounov: Stenka Razine, Op. 13.** The Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. 2-12" discs (C-DX-1107 and C-DX-1108). \$4.

Glazounov's symphonic poem is based on the following story. It seems that Stenka Razine was a robber who sailed up and down the Volga and like Robin Hood was a friend of the common people and an enemy of the King, in his case the Tsar. His most valued treasure was a Persian Princess whom he had captured. The Tsar's forces finally surrounded him and just before his capture and death he tossed his Princess into the Volga, saying that he had never given a gift to the river that had borne him so long and that he was then giving it his most valuable possession.

The music follows the story very closely. At the beginning one hears the famous *Volga Boat Song* and one can well imagine Stenka sailing up and down that wide expanse of water seeking his spoils, a theme for the clarinet indicates the Princess, at the end the music rises to a tumult indicating the capture and death of Stenka by the forces of the Tsar. It is all mildly exciting but rather routine stuff of not too high a calibre.

The present records were imported from England, and as the work is not of great importance, it is not likely that they will be re-pressed in this country. The reproduction is excellent and the playing of the music is highly satisfactory. R.

**Grieg: Lyric Suite, Op. 54.** Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Basil Cameron. 2-12" discs (C-DX-1142 and C-DX-1143). \$4.

Grieg's original *Lyric Suite*, Op. 54, consisted of six pieces for pianoforte. Four of them were transcribed for orchestra by Anton Seidl, the conductor. After his death, Grieg, who did not like the orches-

trations gained permission from Seidl's widow to reorchestrate them. The present recording shows how the composer felt his mood-pictures should be transcribed for orchestra.

The music is typical of Grieg; if you like the *Peer Gynt Suite*, you will surely like this one also. Most of the music is pastoral in style with many fascinating little melodies winding through it. The titles of the four selections indicate the type of music you may expect. They are: *Shepherd Boy*; *Norwegian Rustic March*; *Nocturne*; and *March of the Dwarfs*.

The Liverpool Philharmonic under the direction of Basil Cameron gives highly satisfactory performances of these lovely selections. The reproduction is excellent, and the surfaces of these discs, as are all the records manufactured in England, are just about as smooth as glass.

**Schubert: Overture in the Italian Style in C major.**

Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (C-DX-1157). \$2.

There is an interesting story in connection with this overture and its companion in D. It seems that Schubert had attended at performance of Rossini's opera *Tancredi* and came home full of the spirit of the Italian's music. He said, however, that it would be easy to write such overtures as Rossini did for his operas and that he could do it on the spur of the moment. His friends wagered him a glass of good wine that he could not do it, but he did, and thus we have these two overtures. The one in C is recorded on this disc by the Liverpool Philharmonic.

We doubt that anyone would mistake Schubert's music for Rossini's—it just doesn't have the true Italian sparkle and wit. However, it is pleasant enough to listen to even if it doesn't compare with the product of Rossini. It has been nicely played and well recorded on the present record, which arrived in a recent shipment from England.

**Beethoven: Leonore Overture, No. 3, Op. 72a.** Three sides, and **Beethoven: Prometheus Overture, Op. 43.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-12" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-2. \$2.25.

This recording of the *Leonore Overture, No. 3*, was released in England several years ago and we often wondered why it was not issued in this country where the recording itself was made. We rather think that we have the answer. The reproduction is not particularly good—the boys at the controls turned the volume level down so low at times that the music is barely audible—the balance between *p* and *f* is really very bad. However, many collectors want every Toscanini recording that is available and that is likely the reason for the release of this one. If you are not in this group, you had better hear this set before you buy it.

**Wagner: Die Meistersinger Suite.** The Hallé Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli. 2-12" discs (V-C-3416 and V-C-3417). \$1.90 each.

For those persons who would like a short orchestral version of *Die Meistersinger*, this pair of discs is quite suitable. The suite contains: *Prelude to Act III*; *The Dance of the Apprentices*; *Procession of the Masters*; *Homage to Sachs*; and *Finale*. We don't think that Barbirolli is the ideal conductor of Wagner, we could think of several that we would prefer—Fritz Reiner, for one—but the music in this suite carries it along and Barbirolli does not get in its way. In fact several of the English reviewers were rather liberal in their praise of his performance. However, nearly everyone likes these selections from *Die Meistersinger*, and we predict that the small shipment of these records that just arrived from abroad will not last long. The reproduction is worthy of high praise.

**Bath: Cornish Rhapsody.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hubert Bath with Harriet Cohen (piano). 1-12" disc (C-DX-1171). \$2.

This rhapsody for piano and orchestra was featured in the English film "Love Story." It is movie music of the better quality and its haunting melodies invite repeated playings. If this is an example of the music that English composers are writing for the films, Hollywood might do well to import a few of them.

It is possible, however, that this music may sound better than it really is because of the splendid performance it is given by the distinguished pianist Harriet Cohen and the London Symphony conducted by the composer.

**Strauss Waltzes.** (Special arrangements by Julius Toldi). Orchestra conducted by Sam Freed. 4-10" discs in album. Capitol Set BD-22. \$2.50.

We don't know Mr. Toldi, the gentleman who made the arrangements of these familiar Strauss Waltzes, but we would take a guess that he is a Hungarian. With a stoup of good wine and these records one might have a very pleasant evening. Good wine and this music seem to complement each other. The waltzes in this album are among Strauss' best known. They are: *Tales From the Vienna Woods*; *Southern Roses*; *Wine, Woman and Song*; *Voices of Spring*; *Emperor*; *Artist's Life*; *Vienna Life*; and *Blue Danube*.

**Berlioz: The Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9.** Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (V-11-9008). \$1.

There have been at least a dozen recordings of this popular selection but we do not hesitate to say that of them all the present version stands out as the best of the lot. The superb Boston Symphony, under the distinguished direction of Koussevitzky, gives an unbeatable performance, and the Victor recorders have captured every nuance of that performance with rare

fidelity. Here is an excellent disc with which to test the new radio-phonographs that are now beginning to appear on the market.

**Verdi: La Forza del Destino**—Overture. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (V-11-9010). \$1.

Any good modern recording of this overture would be a very acceptable item but this superlative rendition by Toscanini is more than welcome. Victor recording at its best!

## CHAMBER MUSIC



**Beethoven: Trio in B flat major, Op. 11.** "Gassenhauer." Denis Matthews (piano), Reginald Kell (clarinet) and Anthony Pini (violoncello). Five sides, and **Bach: Adagio in G major.** Denis Matthews (piano). 3-12" discs in album (C-DX-1164 to C-DX-1166). Also available in automatic sequence (C-DX-8200 to C-DX-8202). \$6.

It is said that Beethoven took the air upon which he wrote the variations that make up the final movement of this trio from a tune that was popular at the time, and perhaps that is the reason that it is known as the *Gassenhauer* Trio—*gassenhauer* being the German for street song. The air was from the Austrian composer, Weigl's opera *L'Amor marinaro*.

This work is one of Beethoven's earlier ones and was composed before he developed the strength and skill that made him perhaps the greatest composer of all time. It is not a great work, in fact, some critics feel that it is definitely second-rate. However, all of Beethoven's pieces are worth consideration and the present recording gives students an opportunity of hearing a work beautifully performed that otherwise would doubtless remain entirely unknown to them. It is beautifully performed, for each of the artists in this recording are of top rank and their ensemble playing is something at which to marvel. In our opinion, the performance is vastly superior to the work itself.

R.

**Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in D major, Op. 102, No. 2.**

Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) and Ralph Berkowitz (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-258. \$2.50.

This is one on Beethoven's more important chamber music works, and music lovers will be glad to know that it is now available. It was recorded abroad many years ago by Pablo Casals and Mierczyslaw Horszowski but we don't recall that it was ever made available domestically.

This Sonata dates from the beginning of Beethoven's transitory period, which eventually led up to the last quartets some ten years later. It was a period when he was looking for new ways to express the thoughts that were deepest in his heart. Much can be gained by the study of the present work, and sound

enjoyment may be had from the superb performance of the fine artists who have made this recording. True lovers of Beethoven, and all those who appreciate chamber music, should not neglect to investigate this album.

## VOCAL



**Gretchaninoff Songs.** Maria Kurenko (soprano) with piano accompaniments by Alexander Gretchaninoff. (Sung in Russian.) 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-862. \$3.50.

Victor first issued this album during March, 1942, and after a few months withdrew it. Now it is putting the set back into circulation, which is an excellent thing, as the records are in every way worth while, presenting Maria Kurenko, Alexander Gretchaninoff's favorite interpreter of his songs, in twelve of them. Furthermore, the composer himself is at the piano, and the two artists manage to create an atmosphere of unusual authenticity and beauty.

Mme. Kurenko's voice is in every way suited to this music. Its quality is undeniably reedy and Slavic, and she sings with no little intensity and sense of text. Particularly attractive are the sustained pianissimo effects to be found in *Snowdrop* and *The Wounded Birch*.

Mr. Gretchaninoff's accompaniments are above criticism, and both piano and voice emerge clear and full of life.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Love Songs.** Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Sylvan Shulman. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-595. \$3.50.

C-4331-M Dearly Beloved.

Lover, Come Back to Me.

C-4332-M The Man I Love.

Love Walked In.

C-4333-M Falling in Love With Love.

I Love You.

C-4334-M I'm Falling in Love With Someone.

Lover.

Shame on you Risë Stevens! Is this the girl who was so serious about her career that when she won the Metropolitan Auditions, she waved aside her right to appear with the company the following season and went abroad to appear in small European opera houses and gain further experience? Is this the girl whose early musical days were concerned with such things as Gluck's *Orfeo*?—with Richard Strauss' *Octavian*?

Undoubtedly, in this album, we are meeting Miss Stevens in a purely commercial mood, otherwise it is hard to understand how an artist of her calibre could have consented to be mixed up in these musical settings whose orchestrations are of a heaving, wheezing lushness that is indescribable and which has to be heard to be believed.

We were going to say that Miss Stevens and Sylvan Shulman, whose arrangements these are, have achieved a cocktail-lounge atmosphere, but if it is, it is a cocktail hour where only zombies are served. In years to come, this album may well serve as a curio of what orchestrators were capable of thinking up and dishing out during the frantic forties.

Miss Stevens' attractive voice sounds well and the recording is one of marvelous clarity and realism. Nevertheless, she does sound more than a little silly as she chirps of love on these eight record-sides.

For the record, Miss Stevens and the ornate Mr. Schulman offer *Dearly Beloved*, *Lover Come Back to Me*, *The Man I Love*, *Love Walked In*, *Falling in Love with Love*, *I Love You*, *I'm Falling in Love with Someone*, and *Lover*. You get the idea, we imagine.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

**Somervell: The Street Sounds to the Soldiers' Tread.**

One side, and **Somervell: White in the Moon the Long Road Lies.** John McCormack (tenor) with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1834). \$1.85.

This is one of the last records to be made by the great Irish tenor, John McCormack, who passed to his reward a few days ago. It was released in England in September, 1943, and a few copies reached America this month. It contains two lovely sentimental songs by Sir Arthur Somervell.

Those of us who have not heard McCormack for a long time will want to know how his voice has stood up over the years. H.D.R. in reviewing this record for *The Gramophone* (London) states the case very fairly we think, when he says: "Much of the bloom may have gone from John McCormack's voice, there may be some unsteadiness of tone, but few singers can give such meaning to words as he, and few have such unerring sense of the phrase. He is a law unto himself and he does things that other men would imitate to their peril. But how triumphantly successful and how moving, for example, is that last 'I wish you well' in the soldier's song . . .".

Many of Mr. McCormack's admirers in this country will wish to hear this disc, and we believe that they will feel that it is worthy of a place in their collection of records of the greatest Irish tenor of his time.

**Harmati: Bluebird of Happiness.** One side, and

**D'Hardenot: Because.** Jan Peerce (tenor) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Sylvan Levin. 1-12" disc (V-11-9007). \$1.

Several years ago Jan Peerce made a radio transcription of *Bluebird of Happiness* and one of the Philadelphia radio stations introduced and played it almost daily on a recorded program known as "Dawn Patrol." This program, which came on in the wee small hours of the night was designed for night workers in the industries of the city. It wasn't long before

there were numerous calls for a record of it. Dealers wore themselves out explaining that the recording the customer heard was a radio transcription and was not for sale. Ever since Victor signed Jan Peerce, the Philadelphia dealers have been urging that a commercial record of this selection be made available. A couple of weeks ago, it was released, and ever since, the local stores have been crowded with *Bluebirds of Happiness* fans buying copies of this disc. Many of them bought several copies—one for themselves and others for their friends who could not find it convenient to come to the stores for them. Dealers report that never have they sold so many copies of a 12-inch Red Seal record in so short a time.

For a long time Victor refused to make the recording for the reason that there was absolutely no demand for it except in the immediate Philadelphia area. It will be interesting to note what the sale of this disc will be outside of this territory, without the aid of a continued radio plug. Will the record sell on its own merits in places where it is not known? We rather think so, because it has a rather unique sentimental charm that appeals to the great masses, and we rather feel that a song that will pull at the heartstrings of thousands of Philadelphians will touch their brothers also, no matter where they live—Chicago, San Francisco or Oshkosh.

R.

**Handel: Jephtha—Waft Her Angels.** One side, and

**Handel: Jephtha—Deeper and Deeper Still.** Webster Booth (tenor) with Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (V-C-3414). \$1.90.

For recordings from oratorios we must turn to England, where that form of musical composition still flourishes. A very good example is the present disc. The domestic catalogues do not even mention Handel's *Jephtha*. The two selections so expertly rendered by Webster Booth with fine support by the Liverpool Philharmonic are worthy of the attention of all music lovers who are in any way interested in oratorios. *Deeper and Deeper Still*, a recitative from the second act, depicting Jephtha's grief-stricken emotion when he realizes that he must sacrifice his daughter in obedience to his vow, is a piece of music that might be added to any record library with profit. The aria *Waft Her Angels* is the best known and most popular selection from this Handel work. It has a haunting melody which you will find that you will wish to hear again and again. We cannot recommend this disc too strongly.

**Herbert: The Red Mill—Selections.** Wilbur Evans

(baritone), Eileen Farrell (soprano) and Felix Knight (tenor) with Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-411. \$2.75.

The success of the revival of *The Red Mill* in New York very possibly inspired Decca to prepare and release this splendid recording of selections from

Victor Herbert's ever-popular musical comedy. The fine vocalists, and the excellent chorus and orchestra that supports them under the brilliant direction of Jay Blackton, leave little to be desired from a musical point of view. The attractive booklet with the story of the play and the text of each of the selections that are sung adds greatly to the enjoyment of this album. With it and the records one may have a very satisfactory performance of *The Red Mill* at any time.

The selections included in this collection are: *Moonbeams*; *When You're Pretty and the World Is Fair*; *Every Day Is Ladies' Day With Me*; *The Streets of New York*; *Because You're You*; and *In the Isle of Our Dreams*.

**Kipling Songs.** Norman Cordon (bass-baritone) with piano accompaniments by Archie L. Black. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1030. \$2.75.

V-10-1182 On the Road to Mandalay.  
Danny Deever.

V-10-1183 Gunga Din. (Two sides.)

V-10-1184 Fuzzy Wuzzy.  
Boots.

Here is an album of songs for men if there ever were one. Attractive musical settings for some of Rudyard Kipling's most famous poems sung by one of the younger members of the Metropolitan Opera, a man with a man's voice, Norman Cordon. We can well imagine that these records will get quite a play in the various dormitories and fraternity houses at our many colleges and universities, in fact they should be mighty popular wherever men gather together. Mr. Cordon's resonant voice of rich quality is ideally suited to these selections, and in all of these recordings he has caught the real Kipling spirit, and his marvelous diction makes the exciting text easily understood.

The spirited accompaniments of Mr. Black add fire to these brilliant recordings. The reproduction is highly satisfactory.

**Oklahoma—Selections. Vol. II.** Featuring members of the Original New York Production with Oklahoma Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. 2-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-383. \$2.

This little album containing three additional selections is really a supplement to the now famous Decca Oklahoma Album, which was one of the biggest selling items in the whole field of recorded music. The present numbers were very likely recorded at the same time that the former ones were for they have also been made by members of the Original New York Production. While *Lonely Room*; *It's a Scandal*; and *The Farmer and the Cowman*, the additional selections in Volume II, are not as popular as the ones in Volume I, they are certainly attractive and with both albums one has all of the musical numbers from the show, and can give a complete recorded performance of one of the greatest musical hits of all times.

**Sullivan: The Lost Chord.** One side, and **Steffe: The Battle Hymn of the Republic.** Dennis Morgan (tenor) with the Hollywood Presbyterian Church Choir conducted by Charles C. Hirt and orchestra under the direction of William Lava. 1-12" disc (C-7442-M). \$1.

The prime feature of the two recordings on this disc is the marvelous choral background supplied the soloist by the fine choir of the Hollywood Presbyterian Church. It must be a real musical treat to attend services at that place of worship. The arrangements of both of the present selections are fascinating—note particularly the soprano obbligato near the beginning of the rendition of *The Lost Chord*. We haven't heard anything quite so thrilling in a long, long time. The young lady is right on the key with a voice of ethereal charm and crystalline clarity. We wonder who she is? Her name should certainly have been placed on the label.

This record does not appear on Columbia's regular February list. We suppose that it is a special release. It is worthy of special billing.

**Haydn: My Mother Bids Me Bind My Hair.** One side, and **Haydn: She Never Told Her Love.** Marian Anderson (contralto) with piano accompaniments by Franz Rupp. 1-10" disc (V-10-1199). 75c.

Miss Anderson's art was never better exemplified than by her versions of these 18th century songs to be found on this little disc. To sit back in one's chair and listen to them is a joy in the realm of pure art that is seldom equalled. Franz Rupp gives most sympathetic support at the piano which adds to Miss Anderson's superb performances. The discerning music lover should not pass this record by without a hearing.

## OPERA



**Verdi: Rigoletto**—Questa o quella. Act I. One side, and **Puccini: Turandot**—Nessun dorma. Act III. Jussi Björling (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 1-10" disc (V-10-1200). 75c.

The feature of this record is the first domestic release of the most popular tenor aria from Puccini's music-drama *Turandot*. At least a dozen different recordings of it have appeared in the European catalogs, but this is the first one to be re-pressed in America. Mr. Björling gives a thrilling performance and collectors of operatic recordings will doubtless wish to add this little disc to their libraries. A spirited rendition of *Questa o quella* occupies the reverse side. In neither selections have the European recorders (both recordings were made abroad) been too successful in catching Björling's climaxing high notes, and the accompanying orchestra lacks the clarity that we now take for granted in domestic orchestral recordings.

**CHORAL**

**Gregorian Chants.** Asperges; Vidi aquam; Asperges ad lib No. 1 and No. 2; Masses I, II. St. Bernard's Seminary Choir, Rochester, N. Y., directed by Rev. Benedict A. Ehman. 5-10" discs in album. GIOA Set 1K. \$7.50.

**Gregorian Chants.** Masses III, IV, V. Notre Dame Seminary Choir, New Orleans, La., directed by Rev. Robert Stahl, S.M. 4-10" discs in album. GIOA Set 2K. \$6.

**Gregorian Chants.** Masses VI, VII, VIII. St. Meinrad Abbey Choir, St. Meinrad, Indiana, directed by Dom Rudolph Siedling, O.S.B. 5-10" discs in album. GIOA Set 3K. \$7.50.

**Gregorian Chants.** Masses IX, X, XI. St. Mary's Seminary Choir, Roland Park, Baltimore, Md., directed by Rev. John Selner, S.S. 4-10" discs in album. GIOA Set 4K. \$6.

**Gregorian Chants.** Masses XII, XIII, XIV. Sulpician Seminary of Philosophy Choir, Montreal, Que., directed by Rev. Ethelbert Thibault, P.S.S. 4-10" discs in album. GIOA Set 5K. \$6.

**Gregorian Chants.** Masses XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII. St. Augustine's Seminary Choir, Toronto, Ont., directed by Rev. John E. Ronan, M.C.G. 4-10" discs in album. GIOA Set 6K. \$6.

**Gregorian Chants.** Credos I, II, III, IV, V, VI. St. John's Seminary Choir, Los Angeles, Calif., directed by Rev. Robert E. Brennan, Mus.D. 5-10" discs in album. GIOA Set 7K. \$7.50.

**Gregorian Chants.** Ad libitum Kyries I-XI. St. John's Seminary Choir, Collegeville, Minn., directed by Dom Dominic Keller, O.S.B. 5-10" discs in album. GIOA Set 8K. \$7.50.

**Gregorian Chants.** Ad libitum Glorias I, II, III; Ambrosian Gloria; Sanctus ad lib. I, II, III; Angus ad lib. I, II; Responses at Mass. Mt. St. Mary Seminary Choir, Cincinnati, Ohio, directed by Dr. John J. Fehring. 4-10" discs in album. GIOA Set 9K. \$6.

**Gregorian Chants.** Requiem Mass complete with Subvenite, In Paradisum, Libera me, Ego sum and Canticle Benedictus. St. Charles Borromeo Seminary Choir, Overbrook, Philadelphia, Pa., directed by Dr. James A. Boylan. 6-10" discs in album. GIOA Set 10K. \$8.50.

**NOTE:** The prices quoted are for single albums. The price of the complete set of 10 albums is \$60.

If we devoted this entire issue of **THE NEW RECORDS** to these ten albums, we could but touch on the vast scope of their contents. The best that we can do is to list them and sum up what they contain very briefly. Those who are interested will know their value, and with the aid of the very copious notes that are included with each album, may continue their study of this music with an ever increasing enjoyment

as its fuller meaning becomes more clear to them. We rather feel that many devout Catholics may learn much about the services of their Church from these albums, and for the non-Catholic they will be a revelation. The Mass, the oldest form of Christian worship, is fully explained, and Gregorian Chant, the official music of the Catholic Church, which dates from the sixth century, is beautifully exemplified.

These records known collectively as "The Kyriale Chants" contain the most complete recordings of Gregorian Chant in existence. They consist of the 18 Masses, Credo chants I-VI, the Ad Libitum chants; the Responses at Mass, and the entire Requiem, including the Subvenite, Libera me and In paradisum.

No trouble or expense has been spared to make these recordings a worthy addition to the present limited library of Catholic Church music. They are authentic, as they have been made by the choirs of some of the most famous seminaries in the United States and Canada under the direction of capable and nationally famous exponents of the Solesmes' rhythmic theory.

The quality of the reproduction varies slightly, but on the whole is highly satisfactory. The surfaces are smooth—this is important in music of this quiet nature.

R.

**PIANO**

**Elizabethan Suite.** (Arranged by Ethel Bartlett). Bartlett and Robertson (two pianos). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-256. \$2.50.

Here is a novel album that all persons who are interested in the music of the Elizabethan period will greatly enjoy. Bartlett and Robertson play it with skill and always in the best of taste. The piano reproduction is unusually clear.

We are indebted to Paul Affelder for the following information which appears in his notes that accompany this album:

"There is an interesting story behind Ethel Bartlett's arrangement of this suite. Back in 1926, before Bartlett and Robertson were playing together as a two-piano team, Rae Robertson gave a series of concerts in London devoted to old English music for virginals. This was the first time that Miss Bartlett had heard this music, and she was much impressed by the robustness and virility of the pieces. She felt that not only would a transcription for two pianos be entirely appropriate, since the music was easily adaptable to such an arrangement, but it would also provide an opportunity for these wonderful creations to be heard. If played on the virginals in a large concert hall, the music would be inaudible."

It was not until the summer of 1944, however, that Miss Bartlett could find time to make the transcriptions. The *Elizabethan Suite* had its first performance

at the Robertsons' concert in New York's Carnegie Hall on January 5, 1945, and has since been played with great success all over the country.

The suite is made up of pieces taken primarily from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, a valuable collection of nearly three hundred pieces of keyboard music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is among the earliest keyboard music known to exist, and Miss Bartlett's skillful arrangements have preserved its original character."

Included in the *Elizabethan Suite* are the following compositions: Variations on *John, Come Kiss Me Now* and *Earle of Salisbury's Pavan* by William Byrd (1538-1623); *His Conceit, A Toye, Tower Hill Jigge*, *Tune for Two Virginals* and *His Dreame* by Giles Farnaby (c. 1560-c. 1600); *The Fall of the Leafe* by Martin Peerson (c. 1580-c. 1650), and *The King's Hunting Jigge* by John Bull (1562-1628).

**Medtner: Sonata in G minor, Op. 22.** Benno Moiseiwitsch (piano). 2-12" discs (V-C-3310 and V-C-3311). \$3.80.

Nicholas Medtner, who was born in Moscow in 1879, has been living in England in partial retirement for a number of years, devoting his time to composition. While he is considered as one of the greatest living pianists, he has seldom appeared in public. He has shunned publicity of all kinds and seems to be content to let the world learn of his music as it may. Many of us feel, that though Medtner is very little known and appreciated today, this truly great romantic composer will sometime take his deserved place among those musicians whose works will live long after they have left this careless world. In our opinion, he rates with, but after, Rachmaninoff, whose place in music is surely well-established. Medtner has been called the "Russian Brahms," but it would seem to us that he is really more akin to Schumann. In listening to the present work this impression was greatly strengthened.

A. R., reviewing these records in *The Gramophone* (London), gives this lucid description of the music:

"The G minor Sonata is in one continuous movement which falls, however, into three sections. The middle section is headed *Interludium, Andante lugubre*, a momentary return to the dark opening bars of the work. The mood quickly changes to one of serenity and then to one marked *Maestoso*. This scheme is repeated in foreshortened form and a very free recapitulation follows which culminates in a repetition of the main material found at the start of the Sonata—which has been worked upon all this time—and a triumphant coda. Such are the bare bones of this finely organized work and with such clues the listener will have no more difficulty in following the music than in the case of one of the last Beethoven Sonatas: or, let us say, the final movement of Schumann's C major Fantasy."

We surely feel that any discerning music lover may find real enjoyment and gain some spiritual in-

spiration from repeated playings of these entirely worth while records. As this recording was made in England, it is not at all unlikely that Moiseiwitsch conferred with the composer regarding his interpretation of the music, and it might very well be that the present version is an authoritative one. R.

**Debussy: Preludes, Book I (1910).** E. Robert Schmitz (piano). 7-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1031. \$5.75.

Space is not available to fully cover this remarkable album of discs—so much could be said of them. We suppose that the first question that will come into the minds of our readers will be whether the present set is equal or superior to the very excellent recording of these twelve preludes by Giesecking, which was released by Columbia in February 1939. And that is a hard question to answer. Both men are sincere students of Debussy and both are noted for their interpretations of his works; both were born in France; and both had ample opportunity of coming in contact with the composer during his lifetime. We got out the older records and played them and tried hard to come to some conclusion. We rather favor the Schmitz versions without knowing exactly why. Our best advice is to hear both sets if you can—we understand that the Giesecking set is not now generally available. If you can't make this test, we are sure that you will find the present album entirely satisfactory.

**Balakirev: Islamey (Oriental Fantasia).** Louis Kentner (piano). 1-12" disc (C-DX-1175). \$2.

It has been a long time since we have heard this piece. We seem to remember a recording of it by Simon Barer, but rather think that one is no longer available. Balakirev has always represented the oriental side of Russian culture—that tang of the East that comes from the Caucasus. *Islamey* is typical, and is his best-known work. It requires an able pianist to bring out its rich beauty and we are glad to report that Kentner is fully capable of the task.

**Chopin: Nocturne in F sharp, Op. 15, No. 2.** One side and Rimsky-Korsakoff—arr. Rachmaninoff: **Flight of the Bumblebee and Liadoff: The Music Box, Op. 32.** Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9009). \$1.

Brailowsky plays in his inimitable way these three well-known little pieces, and for those who enjoy tuneful piano recordings faithfully reproduced this disc is highly recommended.

## DICTION

**In the American Tradition.** Readings by Orson Wells. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set A-394. \$3.50.

Orson Wells has chosen four famous speeches by four great Americans for this album, which very appropriately bears the title "In the American Tradi-



tion." The first is Thomas Jefferson's First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1801; the second, Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865; the third, Woodrow Wilson's Address to the Peace Conference in Paris, January 25, 1919; and finally, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's First War Address before Congress, January 6, 1942.

It might be well for all of us in this time of utter confusion and strife, confusion and strife, not alone in the outside world, but confusion and strife of the most serious kind right here at home, among our own people, yes, it might be well for us to listen to these words of wisdom from the outstanding statesmen of the past. It would certainly be to our benefit if our present leaders in Washington would take the few minutes necessary to hear these recordings, and if after hearing them they would ponder well the messages, perhaps our present leadership might be strengthened. Perhaps their efforts would be turned with more force toward accomplishing the things that would be of benefit to all of us, rather than just those things that will make it possible for them to be re-elected in the coming elections.

Mr. Welles reads all of these speeches very well, but we can't help being amused at his evident attempt to imitate the voices of the various original speakers, none of whom, with the exception of Mr. Roosevelt, he ever heard. And in imitating F. D. R., he makes him sound more like Fred Allen than the great American leader of World War II.

Undoubtedly the greatest sale of these records will be to schools for use in their history courses, although those record collectors who specialize in historic recordings will also be interested. Decca is to be congratulated for its enterprise in bringing out this entirely worth while item. It is certainly an altruistic venture because its limited field will make it commercially unprofitable.

R.

**Moby Dick.** Charles Laughton with supporting cast. Musical score composed and directed by Victor Young. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-401. \$4.50.

In this recording Decca offers something of lasting value in the realm of literature. Certainly *Moby Dick* is a classic in American story telling, and too few persons know and appreciate Herman Melville's salty epic of the sea. This is particularly true of our younger generation. Perhaps Charles Laughton's superb characterization of Captain Ahab, the leading figure in the story, will cause some of them to turn to the original text and profit by reading the story in its entirety. A book that Louis Untermeyer, in his notes that accompany this album, says "is the greatest novel ever produced in this country."

In any case, it is so attractively produced on these records, that all who hear them will at least remember *Moby Dick* and have a very good idea of the flavor and the exciting incidents that make this book what it is—"America's unarguable contribution to world-

literature." This last quotation is from the writings of Clifton Fadiman.

We don't know when we have been quite so enthusiastic about a recording of this kind, and it is our hope that it will be greeted with a rewarding response from the record buying public. A response that will warrant Decca's making more such truly fine items available.

R.

**Treasure Island.** Thomas Mitchell with supporting cast. Musical score composed and directed by Victor Young. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-409. \$3.50.

Just a year ago, Columbia released its now famous recorded version of *Treasure Island* with Basil Rathbone as Long John Silver, and now Decca announces its set with Thomas Mitchell in the stellar role. Of course, there must be some reason for companies to duplicate such items but it is hard for us to understand it, let alone explain it. However, the record buying public now has the opportunity of taking its choice. We can't see that the Decca version is in any way superior to the earlier recording, in fact, after listening to both our vote was cast for Columbia. With such a versatile actor as Thomas Mitchell, surely Decca could have found some other vehicle for his vast talents.

## CHILDREN



**Tubby the Tuba.** Victor Jory (narrator) with symphony orchestra conducted by Leon Barzin. 2-10" discs in album. Cosmo Set DMR-101. \$2.50.

Every once in a while we come across an unusually attractive little set of records for children and today we did for sure. It is Paul Tripp's fascinating story of *Tubby the Tuba* with an ingenious musical setting by George Kleinsinger. The characters in the story are the various instruments in a symphony orchestra, and the plot hinges on the sadness of the tuba because he never has any pretty melodies to play—nothing but oompah . . . oompah. Discouraged and downcast after the evening concert, he goes down to the river and becomes acquainted with a frog who teaches him a "beeootiful" tune. The next day at rehearsal Tubby plays his tune for his fellow players and they are most enthusiastic about it and each of them plays it on his own instrument and then the whole orchestra plays it in concert and everybody is happy—especially Tubby the Tuba.

Victor Jory tells the tale with just enough sympathy for poor Tubby to make it interesting and just enough humor to bring many smiles to the faces of the listeners. He really does a grand job. AND here is the secret of the whole recording—our young listeners will learn the various instruments of the orchestra and how they sound without knowing that that is the fundamental idea of this album. Shhh! Don't you dare to tell them.



## BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

**The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents.** Edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel. Illustrated. 431 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$6.

**Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death.** By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

**The Musical Scene.** By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

**Evenings With Music.** By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

**Adventures in Symphonic Music.** By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

**Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann.** By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv, 574 pp. Illustrated. Henry Holt & Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.

**This Modern Music.** By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

**The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.** George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

**NOTE:** All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

**The History of Music in Performance.** Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

**Bad Boy of Music.** By George Antheil. 378 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.

**The Record Book.** By David Hall. 1070 pp. Smith & Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.95.

**The Concerto.** By Abraham Veinus. 312 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

**What We Hear in Music. (Twelfth Revised Edition.)** By Anne Shaw Faulkner. 704 pp. Illustrated RCA Victor Division (Camden, N. J.). Price \$2.25.

**Men and Women Who Make Music.** By David Ewen. xii + 244 pp. Illustrated. The Readers Press (New York). Price \$2.75.

**The Music Goes Round.** F. W. Gaisberg, 273 pp. Illustrated. The Macmillan Company (New York). Price \$3.

**A Mingled Chime. An Autobiography** by Sir Thomas Beecham, Bart. 330 pp. G. P. Putnam's Sons. (New York). Price \$3.50.